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A lifestyle magazine for Costco members



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page 22



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"Sense"-ible decorating 32 European cruises 45 Insurance assurance 46

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**SPECIAL SECTION:
FOR YOUR HOME**

After Costco, the rest is easy 22

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BY MEL KLEIMAN

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BY DIANA JORDAN

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Member profile

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We've got a first with this month's *Online Edition*. As bonus content for the "Buying Smart" column on Costco beef, you'll find 12 pages of excerpts from two of PBS chef Steven Raichlen's cookbooks, *How To Grill* and *The Barbecue! Bible*.

Other exclusive content in the *Online Edition* this month includes:

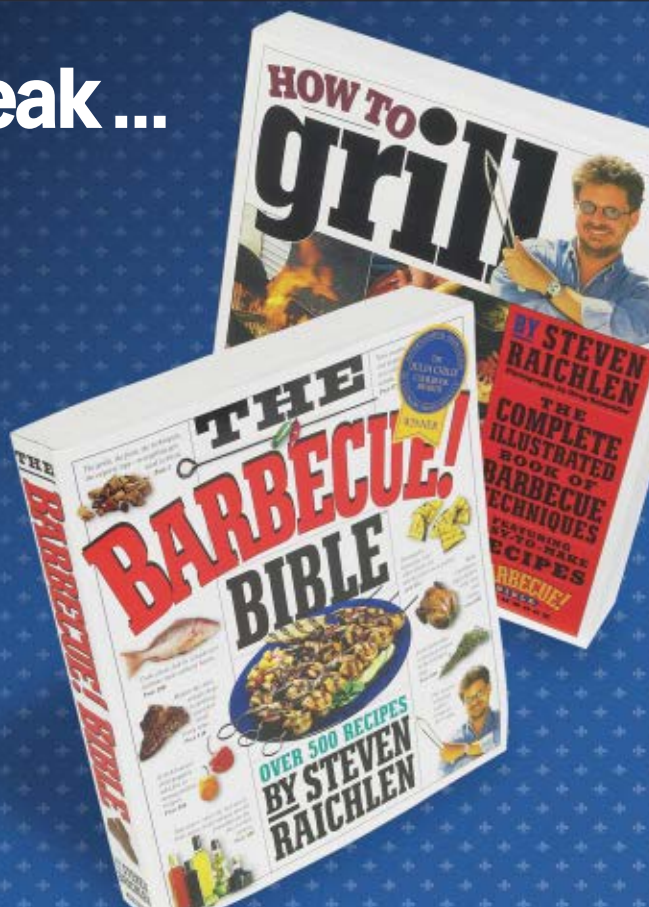
- Bonus Dialogue letters from our readers
- A look at good ethics practices at work
- "Book Look" with Costco book signings and publishing news

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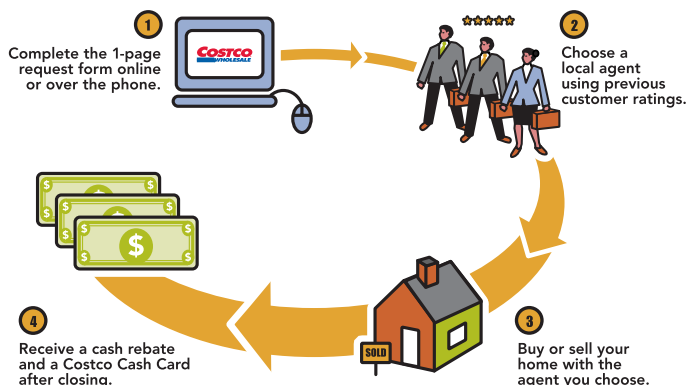
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from the publisher's desk

Ginnie Roeglin



Ginnie Roeglin is Senior Vice President, E-Commerce and Publishing, and Publisher of The Costco Connection.

JULY IS MY FAVORITE month of summer. It gets off with a bang with the Fourth of July celebration and is filled with long sunny days and balmy nights that just require a vacation!

Like a million other people last year, my husband and I purchased our first vacation home, on a lake a few hours away. Like other Costco members described in this month's cover story, beginning on page 22, we quickly realized that we were now faced with furnishing an entire house in a fairly remote area, with the closest Costco warehouse nearly an hour away. Even more overwhelming than deciding and purchasing what we needed to buy was how we were going to get it all there.

Of course, we visited Costco and stocked up on sheets, pillows and blankets, bath and beach towels, cookware and knives, dishes, glasses and silverware. We purchased everything that we could squeeze into our car and trunk and headed out to our new vacation getaway.

But what about all those big items that we couldn't squeeze into the car, or even physically lift, such as a leather sofa and love seat for the living room, dining table and chairs, televisions, bedroom sets and mattresses, washer and dryer, patio furniture and a stainless steel barbecue grill? Our answer was costco.com.

With literally a few clicks on my computer, we managed to order all of those items on costco.com and had them delivered directly to our new door! With the white-glove delivery service, drivers carried the goods into our new home, unpacked them, set them up and even removed the cartons. Voila! Our new vacation getaway was completely furnished and ready for us to enjoy. We will also enjoy the Executive Membership 2% Reward and Costco American Express rebate checks that we earned on our purchases!

Whether you have a vacation home or not, you'll be pleased to know that our annual Passport to Summer Savings is well under way. If you haven't already done so, be sure to pick up a coupon booklet in your local warehouse. This month, you'll save on flooring, Dyson and Eureka vacuums, Philips LCD TVs, Dell computers, an HP all-in-one printer, a pool-table tennis table, and more. Happy July from all of us at Costco! ☐



David W. Fuller is Assistant Vice President, Publishing, and Editor of The Costco Connection.

from the editor's desk

David W. Fuller

READING FREELANCER Diana Jordan's interview with author Ivan Doig (page 39) has given me pause to think about the importance of thoughtfulness. Doig notes he is a lover of words and that he aspires to express his stories "in loving language that is also an art." He is a thoughtful writer.

It is interesting that in this age when the subject of "values" often comes up, we seldom, if ever, hear thoughtfulness being considered as a value. Yet this value underlies so many others. Without thoughtfulness, how can we possibly value family or community? Without thoughtfulness, courage becomes rashness and charity becomes habit. Without thoughtfulness, we can slide down a slope of self-interest that can isolate us from success, no matter how we define that elusive goal.

So, what is thoughtfulness? It is a slowing down of our usually staccato lives. It is a pause to reflect, to consider options and impacts. Impacts on ourselves, on those to whom we are close, those we may not know. Many would extend this consideration beyond humanity into the entire animate and, in some cases, inanimate world.

Increasingly, we see businesses adopting codes of ethics that suggest a greater emphasis on thinking of the consequences of corporate actions. But putting such codes into practice is a daunting challenge, mainly because of the element of the reflective pause I mentioned. A pause in business is generally interpreted as "downtime," "inactivity," or even "lost productivity." In reality, used to implement the practice of a corporate value, a pause is none of these things.

Yes, because business is business, a pause (which takes time) will always equate to an expense. But any thoughtful cost-benefit analysis will always render such a pause time well spent. ☐



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Debate goes on

In response to the June Debate, "Should cell-phone use be allowed in airplanes?"

YES. Cell-phone use should be allowed on planes. However, people should learn which calls to make and which to wait on. Chuck Underwood argues that since people do not know how to behave, it should not be allowed. That is absurd! People have learned cell-phone etiquette for other situations. They can learn how, and when, to use cell phones on airplanes.

Joaquin Quiroz Jr., Escondido, California

NO. Having recently returned from a cross-country flight on which I endured passengers' cell-phone conversations before and after the flight, I can't image enduring such banter while in the air. I already know all about a neighboring passenger's old house, how to reprogram his garage-door opener, who the good neighbors are, where to find the touch-up paint, etc. He was apparently talking to the new owner (and to everyone else on the plane, given his loud voice). I also know about all his business meetings, who needs to get fired at his company (I can't remember her name, but she's getting the ax this week!) and lots of other trash I would just as soon not know about.

Tom Mason, Oregon City, Oregon

YES. I think cell-phone use should be allowed. Maybe the cell-phone users could be put in a separate cordoned-off section since they don't seem to be bothered by the lack of privacy and noise. When they make their reservations, they'll specify that they want to be in the cell-phone area.

Jennifer Bean, via e-mail

NO. I am a frequent business traveler (I flew more than 100,000 miles last year). At present, if you absolutely have to make a call, there are phones on the plane, although they are relatively expensive, which is wonderful because it keeps the use down. I can't imagine trying to work or sleep on a plane with myriad needless conversations going on around me. Let's face it, many people are oblivious to those around them and will talk loudly and long just to pass the time. If you don't believe me, just sit on a train one morning.

Christine Lewis, Normandy Beach, New Jersey

Odds and ends

Costco crooner

We are faithful Costco members and always look forward to getting *The Costco Connection*. After reading "Long live the King" in the May issue about an Elvis Presley tribute artist, I decided to write you about my husband, Bob Mario.

Bob volunteers his time to croon old standards at assisted-living facilities, nursing homes and specialized hospitals. When Bob sings at these venues, I often observe seniors in the audience, many of whom are physically ailing, singing along, dancing, smiling and, at times, crying. The songs he performs bring back special memories for them.

He practices songs by such artists as Dean Martin, Hoagy Carmichael, Frank Sinatra and Al Martino every day without fail. We are always picking up blank music CDs at Costco so he can record his practices. He says practice makes perfect. As for me, I always get a little nervous when he drags me up at one of his performances for a quick fox trot across the dance floor during an instrumental.

Karen Mario, Warren, New Jersey

Kudos for Kirkland Signature

I enjoyed the article "The Sign of Value" (June, 2006) and of course, I enjoy buying the Kirkland Signature brand of so many items. I appreciate all the research and hard work that goes into making the items the highest quality on the market.

My question is: How can we, as members, give you feedback on particular items? Is there a form at the store or online that we could use? What's more efficient for you?

Keep up the good work.

Phyllis S. Taylor, via e-mail

You can provide feedback on any Costco product to the Member Services Department at 1-800-774-2678 or fill out a form and put it in the suggestion box at your local warehouse.—Ed.

Your article on Kirkland Brand Products prompted me to write. Everything you say is true!

Several years ago a friend of mine started giving me a case of commercial-quality tuna as a hostess gift for the use of my ski condo. When she was no longer able to get the tuna, I went into "tuna shock!" Everything that I bought labeled "white albacore tuna" was awful. I even threw many cans away.

Then several years ago while shopping in Costco, I sampled your Kirkland Signature tuna. This was the great stuff that I remembered. Needless to say, I've converted anyone I saw looking at tuna. I am a solid Kirkland Signature brand buyer now, and yes, everything is 'as good as or better'!

Pat Baglietto, Stockton, California

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Have something to say?

Readers are encouraged to submit letters to our editors on any topic or issue covered in *The Connection*. Please include your full name and phone number or address. Send all letters to: Dialogue, *The Costco Connection*, P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088; fax to (425) 313-6718; or e-mail to dialogue@costco.com. The editors reserve the right to edit letters for publication.



CHRIS RUSNAK

Debate Goes On

In response to the May Debate, "Should NASCAR be restricted?"

YES. A discussion of NASCAR in a community forum such as *The Costco Connection* would not be complete without an expert's presentation of the facts of the effects of noise pollution on human and community health.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) Guideline for Community Noise, as the population grows, there is increasing exposure to noise pollution, which has profound public health implications.

Noise pollution creates a need for action at the local level, as well as for improved legislation and management. Urban noise pollution produces direct and cumulative adverse health effects by degrading residential, social, working, and learning environments with corresponding real (economic) and intangible (well-being) losses.

WHO has documented seven categories of adverse health effects of noise pollution on humans.

- Hearing impairment
- Interference with spoken communication
- Sleep disturbances
- Cardiovascular disturbances
- Disturbances in mental health
- Impaired task performance
- Negative social behavior and annoyance reactions

Please consider providing some space for educating your readers on the hazards of community noise.

*Mark J. Huber
Richmond, Virginia*

Odds and ends

Don't leave home without it

RECENTLY WHILE VACATIONING on a Royal Caribbean Cruise Line to Nassau,

Bahamas—purchased through Costco—my mother and I were so caught up in a day of shopping in Nassau we failed to take our passports when leaving the ship. Upon arrival back at the docks, we were in utter despair to realize we needed a picture ID to pass through customs and return to the ship.

As my mom was attempting to negotiate our passage through customs without proper identification, I remembered the Costco American Express® Card with picture ID I had used for all my off-ship purchases. When the very large and foreboding customs official looked at me sternly, I shouted "I've got my Costco Card." Everyone in the line behind us cheered and we avoided a long and embarrassing swim home!

*Lisa Noone
Westford, Massachusetts*

The brand that means more

I AM A BIG FAN of the Kirkland Signature™ products. There is something that you could do to further enhance some products while offsetting the criticism about excess packaging. Many items come in large jars, jugs or other containers that can be cleaned and reused for storage.

However, the labels don't come off easily. Requiring suppliers to use peel-off adhesive on the labels would make reusing the containers easier. Adding a "clean and reuse this container" message on appropriate containers would help reduce the waste flow to local landfills and provide added benefits to members. I view the box the salad comes in as worth at least a dollar, making it an even bigger bargain!

*Brian Krieg
Portland, Oregon*

YOUR KIRKLAND SIGNATURE brand really is one I look for. When I first joined Costco, I'd try it tentatively, but always with good results. Now I reach for Kirkland Signature more often than not.

Recently, my husband and I went shopping for a grill. We went to a barbecue specialty store assuming to pay top dollar, but expecting expertise and good service. We were sold more of a grill than we wanted, but it had all the features we needed. They did not have one in the store and would get one from another location within a few days and have it assembled. After three weeks of phone calls, we finally went in to pick up our grill. Unfortunately, it was not assembled nor the right model. We gladly accepted our money back.

We headed to Costco, where I

had seen a Kirkland Signature gas grill after we had purchased the other grill. We were impressed by the construction, the little extras—such as the shelf that becomes a removable serving tray—the halogen light on the rotisserie and the solid fit and feel of the moving parts. The added bonus was the price, \$200 less.

The box was quite heavy and we quickly found a Costco associate who helped us get it onto a flat cart. As we left the building, we were told where to find someone to help us load it into our van. Considering I had always thought of Costco as more of a "help yourself" sort of place, I was very impressed with the level of service.

When we got the grill home, we were delighted to find it almost completely assembled in the box. All we had to do was add some handles, a shelf and take the plastic wrappings off the parts.

We had an extremely delicious dinner of grilled Costco salmon. It was the most enjoyable grilling experience I've had. The side burner was more powerful than my kitchen stove.

I am having a large cookout next week and am feeling very confident that it will be a success. Of course, I'll be hitting Costco to get all the party food!!

*Michele Peterson
Springfield, Virginia*



IRIDIO PHOTOGRAPHY

By David Wight

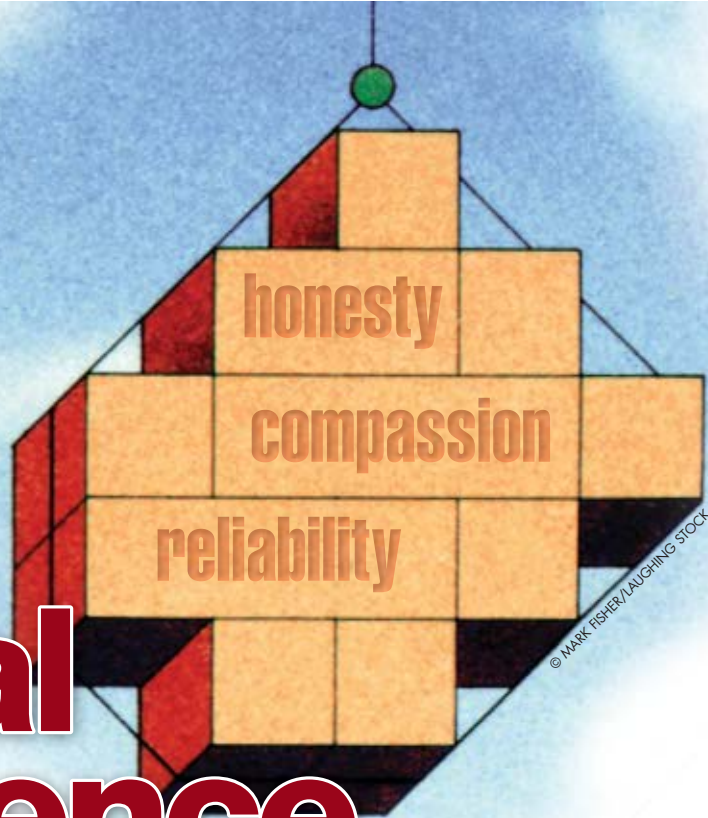
Guiding business with your personal values

ethical difference

If you've browsed a newspaper or watched the news in the past six months, you couldn't miss seeing examples of a popular media focus this year: unethical business practices. The allegations widely reported against Enron, Tyco International, WorldCom and several other companies have resulted in hyper-scrutiny of business conduct under the negative glare of media floodlights.

This attention prompts us to examine the unasked questions—the flip side of the story. What about the thousands of businesses out there that anonymously walk the ethical straight and narrow, or newly established companies that want to start off on the right foot?

Running an ethical business requires constant discipline, ultimately guaranteeing that the very fabric of an organization is woven of enduring values and principles, experts say. And according to several Costco members who shared their experiences with us, guiding a business with a well-stated set of ethics yields rewards beyond financial gain.



Values, mission and the code

Dr. Gary Wenet, a Seattle-based psychologist and author specializing in business leadership, has observed many business successes and failures, and points to the long-term benefits derived from a strong ethical foundation. "It makes good business sense to know clearly what you want to be as a business, what you want to represent, what you want to contribute and what kind of culture you want to establish in terms of how you conduct business, both internally and externally," he says.

What is the source of ethics in any organization? "It starts at the top with the leadership of any company," says Wenet. "No matter how big or small [a company is], it's extremely important and makes good business sense to have a strong moral compass, a strong set of values that serves as the foundation of a business."

Wenet says that having a mission statement is the first step, especially if it speaks to the values that a company represents. But it's not enough unless those value statements are translated into action and clearly communicated to the employees.

"If you're really going to walk the talk, what does it look like?" he asks. "That's how people can hold themselves accountable and that's how a company can hold the employees accountable."

Applying ethical practices consistently

Ethical business practices are very much an extension of personal standards, many experts say.

At BETAH Associates, a Bethesda,



Dr. Gary Wenet

responsibility

truth

respect

“

... it's extremely

important and makes

good business sense

to have a strong moral

compass, a strong set

of values that serves

as the foundation of

a business.”

—Dr. Gary Wenet



Wilhelmina Bell-Taylor

JOHN HARRINGTON PHOTOGRAPHY

Maryland, firm that provides professional and technical services, owner **Wilhelmina Bell-Taylor** has instituted an ethics code called The BETAH Way. Establishing the guiding values for her business, this personal approach deals specifically with

integrity, honesty, loyalty and both legal and moral standards, and is an extension of her faith.

These values are consistently communicated and fostered throughout the organization. “Your behavior is who you are,” Bell-Taylor told *The Connection*. “The BETAH Way is who I am.”

Steve Fleischmann, owner of Fleischmann Office Interiors, says his 25-year-old Seattle business is sustained by a strong sense of ethics. “I believe to be successful, ethics and values are a discipline that you must apply consistently,” he says. “Eventually the process becomes natural and easy, and the byproducts include business success, highly motivated employees and a good reputation in the community.”

When asked where his sense of ethics came from, he answers quite candidly. “I observed that my dad in his own business didn’t operate the same way. It wasn’t that he didn’t have ethics, but he didn’t follow through consistently. When it came time to start my own company, I knew it could be done differently.”

A condition of employment

“Our code of ethics is like the compass for our company,” says **Bruce Davis**, a partner in Day & Nite Plumbing & Heating Inc. in Lynnwood, Washington. “We use it for everything. When we hire people, we ask them to embrace our ethics if they come aboard. We also show our vendors that our ethics policy is on the back of every one of our business cards. We tell suppliers that we gravitate toward businesses that are like us. Truth and honesty are so basic to good business.”

Davis adds, “Until an ethics policy becomes an integral part of a company, it is merely good intentions. But when it becomes standard operating procedure, as it has with us, it steers everyone and is used, consciously or subconsciously, in every decision we make as a company.”

North Island Financial Credit Union (NIFCU), with 10 branch locations and 350 employees in the San Diego area, recognizes how important it is for an ethics code to extend beyond a written policy to be an integral part of the corporate culture. The company also requires annual employee endorsement of the code as a condition of employment.

In its 2002 employee opinion survey, the number-one response, with 99.7 percent of those surveyed indicating “favorable,” was for this statement: “Management has clearly communicated NIFCU’s culture and values to me.”

When *The Connection* asked executive vice president **Geri Dillingham** how NIFCU’s code of ethics is enforced, her answer reflected the goal of all ethics codes. “The idea is not to have to [enforce] the policy because

Steps for developing a code of ethics

Having a code of ethics in place is a wise business practice. Here are several tips for developing your code. The leader of the company is an essential participant in the process (CEO might also stand for chief ethics officer), as are managers, supervisors and employees. The employee voice is critical in shaping language that will relate best to all of the organization.

Identify the moral barometer for your business environment, listing specific problems for your business. Employees may have a better sense of problems

that management is unaware of. What is bothering people in the organization? What is bothering customers or suppliers?

Brainstorm a list of values that the organization stands for. Whittle that list down to a manageable five core values that will most directly address your company’s specific problems and mission.

Use model codes from other companies to build your own. As with the Costco example (see sidebar), many companies recognize relationships with customers, employees, suppliers and shareholders as the desired fundamentals in developing an ethics code. Using an example that has been demonstrated to work well will save trial and error.

Produce the written code for inclusion in employee handbooks, annual reports and

elsewhere. Create a plan for intensely introducing the code to the entire organization, including the board of directors.

Breathe life into the code daily. Use it for guidance in all decisions and actions. Walk the talk at every level.

Beware of the “Three P’s”—print, post and pray—advises Lee WanVeer of the Ethics Resource Center in Washington, D.C. “Going beyond communication, it’s not enough to put these things up on a bulletin board and pray that everyone will be good,” he says. “This process requires an effort to make the articulation of what’s important—the core values—alive, dynamic and systemic in the organization.”—DW

free

devotion

you create a culture that doesn't tolerate that kind of behavior," she said.

The guidance role of an ethics code is heavily valued by many employees because it perpetuates a clear sense of direction. **David Batstone**, author of an upcoming book, *Saving the Corporate Soul* (Jossey-Bass, 2003), acknowledges that attitude.

"Employees must always approach a company with bigger expectations than just a paycheck," he told *The Connection*. "I encourage employees to put stress on how you align who you work for with what you find meaningful. With a good combination, the more successful the company and the employee."



STUART MCCALL/NORTH LIGHT IMAGES

Transcending bottom-line benefits

Many people recognize that there are payoffs to running an ethical business that transcend the usual bottom-line measurement. Most point to company ethics as enhancing their ability to attract and retain

David Van Seters

highly committed, loyal and productive employees, and to sustain strong customer loyalty.

David Van Seters, president of Small Potatoes Urban Delivery, a grocery and produce home-delivery operation in Vancouver, British Columbia, says his company's code of ethics clearly benefits his business. "There have been so many home-delivery businesses that have imploded and gone out of business," says Van Seters. "We believe that our ethical mission is one reason why our customers have stayed with us and why we've been able to hire more committed staff and keep them."

But Wenet, the psychologist, also suggests

that companies should remain realistic about the impact of their ethics code. "In reality, no matter how smart of an ethical standard you set within a business, you don't ultimately have control over everybody who works there. There are going to be some people who will violate the ethical code, but that doesn't mean you've failed as a business," he says. "At the end of the day, you just want to be able to look at yourself in the mirror and know that you have those standards in place and that you are true to those standards, especially if you're the leader of that company." ■

Will Fifield, Tod Jones, Stephanie E. Ponder, Mark E. Stroder and Tim Talevich contributed to this article.

CONNECTING

Here are some sources for more information on ethics in business.

Books:

- *The Inner Work of Leaders*, by Barbara Mackoff and Gary Wenet (AMACOM, 2001)
- *In Search of Ethics: Conversations with Men and Women of Character*, by Len Marrella (DC Press, 2001; www.focusonethics.com)

Web sites:

- The Ethics Resource Center, www.ethics.org
- Institute of Business Ethics, www.ibe.org.uk
- Walker Information, www.walkerinfo.com
- Business Ethics, www.business-ethics.com
- Junior Achievement's Business Ethics Center, www.ja.org/programs/programs_ethics.shtml

Costco and the issue of ethics

In a year when Costco will pass the 100,000 employee mark, a code of ethics continues to represent the very fiber of the organization. The code applies to decisions and actions throughout the company, and is thoroughly communicated to all employees.

"Every company needs to build a culture throughout, at every level," says Costco President and CEO Jim Sinegal, "where each employee—not just the CEO—must have a zeal to identify ethical issues."

In building such a culture at Costco, each new employee receives a formal orientation, which includes viewing a video presentation on the Code of Ethics. Each worker also signs an employee agreement that includes a first-chapter discussion of the code.

In addition, more than 12,000 managers and supervisors worldwide have attended Costco University 101, a leadership training course thoroughly grounded in the Code of Ethics.

On the individual components of the code, Jim has these comments:

Obey the law. "Compliance everywhere, and often voluntarily going beyond what the law requires."

Take care of members. "No misleading hype, always minimum markups and our double guarantee: We stand behind our products, and if you're unhappy with your membership, even on the 364th day of membership, we'll refund your membership fee."

Take care of employees. "If we lose an employee, we see that as our failure. We strive to provide high wages, excellent benefits and opportunity not just for today but for the future. Diversity in our workforce is a business imperative that benefits every employee."

Respect suppliers. "We keep our word, pay on time and do not bully suppliers. We want to keep our reputation for being a tough negotiator but always fair. Every supplier relationship is a partnership, not adversarial."

Reward shareholders. "As our code indicates, following these other value statements naturally leads to success and our ultimate responsibility of reward for the shareholder."

Overall, Jim doesn't see as bleak a picture as recent headlines suggest. "Probably 99.5 percent of companies are acting appropriately," he observes. "Unfortunately the bad apples give the rest a black eye."—DW





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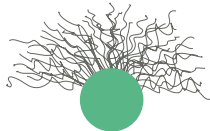
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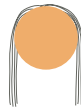
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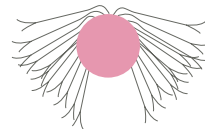
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Victory, without victims

YEARS AGO, I LEARNED an important lesson I remember whenever I'm involved in a negotiation or dispute: "Settle for victory."

Sometimes, in the midst of a conflict, we become so obsessed with defeating the other guy that we lose sight of what constitutes a win for ourselves. We're angry or hurt, so we want to inflict pain on the source. That's rarely the best route to our own future happiness.

Instead, learn how to focus on getting a positive outcome for yourself rather than punish-ment for the other guy.

I learned the importance of settling for victory when I was involved in a major business

dispute. The other party had violated the terms of an important contract. I was furious. I wanted him to pay—and pay big!

Fortunately, my attorney asked me an important question, one that changed my life. "What would be a good outcome regardless of what happened to the other guy?" As a result, even though I was the wronged party, I ended up paying.

It was one of the best decisions I've ever made. I came away with my victory. So what if the miserable guy on the other side walked away with some of my money?

How do you learn to settle for victory? First, in a dispute, keep an open mind and think of different options that might work for you. If you have only one position, you're not negotiating, you're demanding.

Next, communicate. Once you stop talking, there's no hope of a positive outcome. Things don't get better just because you're ignoring each other. Try hard not to take things personally. The other party may suggest approaches you find insulting. Remember to look for what works for you in the long run, even if it hurts your pride today.

Finally, look for win-win solutions, where both sides leave with something. Remember, for you to come away with a victory doesn't mean the other guy has to suffer a defeat. ☐

Take the work out of networking



FOR MOST OF US, making small talk at business and social events is about as pleasant as a paper cut. But these encounters don't have to be so dreaded, advises Debra Fine, a professional speaker and business trainer.

Instead, small talk is a chance to make a good first impression, which can lead to deeper, more productive relationships, says Fine, a Costco member based in Denver.

"Acquiring this skill will help you develop rapport

with people and leave a positive impression that lasts longer than an exchange of business cards," she says.

Fine, who wrote a book on the matter, *The Fine Art of Small Talk* (Hyperion, 2005), offers these tips for improving small-talk skills.

- Be the first to say hello and introduce yourself. Act as if you're the host and introduce new arrivals to your conversational partner or partners.

- Smile first and always shake hands when you meet anyone.

- Get somebody to talk about why they're attending the event and you are on your way to engaging them in conversation.

- Listen carefully for information that can keep the conversation going.

- When asked, "How's business?" or "What's going on?" answer with more than "Pretty good" or "Not much." Tell more about yourself so that others can learn more about you.

- Be prepared. Spend a few minutes before an anticipated event preparing to talk easily about three topics.

- Have exit lines. You need to move around and meet others.

- Make a positive impression by shaking hands and saying goodbye as you leave. ☐

For more from Fine, or to order the book, visit her Web site at www.DebraFine.com.



Running with the big dogs

ABOUT A MILLION new business ventures are launched each year in this country. In such a fiercely competitive environment, how does one business set itself apart from the pack?

The ways that successful companies succeed where others fail are highlighted in *Alpha Dogs*:

How Your Small Business Can Become a Leader of the Pack (Collins, 2005) by Costco member Donna Fenn

(www.donnafine.com). Fenn has profiled entrepreneurs and covered business trends for 20 years as a journalist.

She spotlights eight "Alpha Dog" small businesses that have pursued a specific strategy to become a market leader.

These Alpha Dogs have excelled in customer service, tapped technology, developed a strong brand, formed alliances and taken other creative steps in building their businesses, Fenn writes.

Take, for example, Zane's Cycles in Branford, Connecticut. In a time when independent bike dealers are being pushed out by national chains and online dealers, Zane's Cycles has managed not only to survive but to become one of the largest dealers of Trek bicycles in the world. The key to this Alpha Dog's success is a rabid customer-service philosophy.

The most important point that Fenn makes in her book is this: Alpha Dogs have a lot to offer any business owner. Sure, it's a dog-eat-dog world out there. But some smart steps can help make sure you don't go home hungry. ☐



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Use Roth for retirement accounts

My tax preparer again this year advised me to set up a Roth IRA. Please tell me again the benefits of setting up these accounts and the parameters. Also, can I transfer money from an existing IRA to a Roth account?

—Hayward Ludens, via e-mail

HAYWARD, YOUR TAX preparer couldn't be more right. As far as I am concerned, anyone who is eligible to invest in a Roth should do it.

Let's walk through the basics: If you are under 50 and single with modified adjusted gross income (MAGI) of \$95,000 or less, or if you are a married couple filing a joint return with MAGI of \$150,000 or less, you can invest the maximum of \$4,000 per person in 2006. If you are over 50 the maximum annual contribution rises to \$5,000.

The main difference between a Roth and a traditional IRA is that money you put in a Roth has already been taxed—there is no tax break on your initial investment. With the traditional IRA, you typically invest pretax money, which produces an immediate tax break.

But with a Roth you can end up with a lot more in your pocket. That's because after the age of 59 1/2, as long as you have owned the Roth for at least five years, all your withdrawals will be completely tax-free. Compare that to a traditional IRA or 401(k), where every dollar you withdraw will be hit with income tax.

Also, there are no required "minimum distributions" once you reach 70 1/2. Unlike a traditional IRA, with a Roth the IRS does not require that you make withdrawals; you can pass along the entire account to your heirs, and they, too, will not have to pay tax. Any traditional IRA assets you leave to your beneficiaries will be hit with income tax.

The money you originally contribute to a Roth has no strings attached; you can withdraw that money at any time no matter how old you are or how long the money has been in the Roth, without any taxes or penalties. It's only the earnings on your contributions that have to stay in the Roth for at least five years and until you are 59 1/2 to be free of a 10 percent penalty and income tax.

For example, let's say you are under 50 and invest \$4,000 in each of the next three years, earning an average of 8 percent a year. After three years your Roth is worth \$14,024. The \$12,000 you invested is yours to withdraw at any time, without tax or penalty.

As for transferring an existing IRA into a Roth, you can do so, but only if your MAGI is below \$100,000 (for both single people and married couples). Note that you will have to pay ordinary income tax on whatever amount you convert. So you

might want to check with that tax preparer and decide if it makes more sense to convert smaller sums over a few years to dampen the tax bite.

I am retired and have concerns about the American dollar continuing to lose value. I have been considering moving a portion of my funds into precious metals as a hedge against the dollar. Would this be wise?

—Ron Markwood, Fort Collins, Colorado

I ALWAYS GET concerned when people tell me they are considering making a big move in any one direction. I am a believer in diversification; the best long-term approach is to spread your assets among a variety of different types of asset classes.

I bet part of your motivation comes from the fact that precious metals have been on an absolute tear recently. The price of gold hit a 25-year high in early 2006. Geopolitical concerns, the weakening dollar you refer to and a spike in demand from industrializing nations such as China are all mentioned as factors in the precious-metal rally.

I agree with you that precious metals look smart right now, but we can't overlook the fact that they have already had a big run. So consider placing just a portion of your assets in precious metals; as much as 20 percent seems reasonable to me. You will get the hedge you want while remaining diversified.

I owe \$88,000 and have seven years remaining on my mortgage. My interest rate is 6.9 percent. I also have a balance of \$75,000 on a home equity line of credit at an elevating rate of 7.5 percent. Should I refinance and combine both loans into one?

—Vilma Basco, via e-mail

THE PAINFUL lesson you are learning is that home equity lines of credit (HELOCs) are dangerous when interest rates are rising, as they have been for the past two years. That's because HELOC rates are not fixed; they pretty much move in lock step with every change in short-term interest rates.

Assuming you aren't planning to move soon, and if your FICO credit scores are good, you should be able to refinance both loans into one fixed-rate loan with a rate below 6 percent. Since you have only seven years left on your primary mortgage, you should consider a 10-year mortgage—15 years at the most. That should give you plenty of time to pay off the combined balances.

Your total payment on the fixed 10-year would be just under \$1,800 a month. This is a few hundred dollars more than your current combined payments, but the HELOC could keep rising. Locking into a fixed rate will buy you a lot more security. ☐

Ask Suze Orman

Send your personal-finance questions to:

Q&A with Suze Orman
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Suze will answer
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The Truth about the United States.

Have you ever noticed that some United States coins have rough edges while others are smooth? Called "reeding," these grooves are found on 10¢, 25¢, 50¢ and \$1 pieces. Originally minted from gold and silver, the rough edges helped deter filing of the metal and made the coins difficult to counterfeit. Today, none of the coins minted in the U.S. contain precious metals, but reeding has continued. This maintains the look and feel of each coin and helps visually impaired citizens differentiate the coins they are carrying by touch. The United States. Who knew? Brought to you by MCI. We shrink the globe.

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A hard look at title insurance

Also:

- PC recycling
- What's organic?
- Online sales tax

TITLE INSURANCE IS often a confusing home-buying requirement that costs buyers about \$17 billion each year.

Lenders require title insurance when financing a home mortgage as protection against potential ownership claims or liens on the property. Premiums for this service can account for as much as one-third of the closing costs of escrow. The more expensive the property, the higher the premium.

Instead of comparison shopping, most home buyers simply use the title insurance agent recommended by the mortgage lender, real estate agent or lawyer. As a result, kickback schemes have proliferated, leading to vastly inflated costs of title insurance for many innocent home buyers.

In addition, title insurance companies are often fully or partly owned by real estate lenders and brokers. Such an arrangement, federal regulators say, can create conflicts of interest. That's why Congress, prompted by allegations of kickbacks and other abuses, is taking a hard look at how this industry is currently functioning.

The toxic side of recycling

Computer companies are expanding take-back offers by offering U.S. customers free shipping and recycling of their outdated hardware, but there are still problems with the system.

The Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition says increasing numbers of computers are being recycled, and about 80 percent of the electronic waste slated for recycling in the United States is being shipped overseas. But when these products reach their destination, they are usually dismantled by low-wage workers who are exposed to the toxic chemicals and other electronic elements without any protection or oversight from U.S. or local governments.

Something needs to be done before this recyclable material is shipped out of the country to make sure that people who handle it abroad are protected.

What's organic?

If you prefer to buy natural body-care products in the United States, be aware there is no definitive way to identify the "organic" nature of products that do not carry the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) seal.

Instead, shoppers find an assortment of confusing labels on organic body-care products, which can mean any of the following definitions.

USDA Organic. This official seal guarantees that the ingredients in a product are free of antibiotics, synthetic pesticides and genetically modified organisms. Products containing the USDA seal contain at least 70 percent organic ingredients.

Natural. This is a "feel-good" word, but there is

no firm definition for this category. However, the industry's consensus is that "natural" products must contain no artificial preservatives, sweeteners or coloring, chemical additives or hydrogenated oils.

Certified Organic Ingredients. This indicates that ingredients are certified by the USDA as organic. However, the entire product is not "organic" because it may contain or use nonorganic materials and processes.

Online shoppers due for shock

Shoppers who buy on the Internet or by mail order because they don't have to pay sales tax are due for a dollar shock. States are moving closer to collecting taxes on these transactions.

Nineteen more states have now agreed, as part of what is called the Streamlined Sales Tax Project, to remove the sales-tax difficulties of small and medium-sized businesses over the Internet. The project's proposals include tax-law simplification and more efficient administrative technologies as a way to reduce the burden of tax collection.

The bottom line is that 45 states and the District of Columbia will finally be able to collect out of consumers' pockets the mega-dollars due them in sales and use taxes. [E]



AMY CANTRELL

David Horowitz is a leading consumer advocate. His "Fight Back!" commentaries are heard daily on the Jones Radio Network. For stations and times, check the radio page at www.fightback.com.

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Ask David Horowitz

MY DAUGHTER made credit mistakes in college. She's now paid off the bills, but needs to improve her credit rating. In order to erase the bad marks, the credit bureaus insist that her creditors contact them—but the creditors won't budge. Many companies advertise they can help us, but they charge a lot. What should she do?

**Cheryl
Rancho Murieta, CA**

CHERYL, an outside party can't help. Credit violations can legally remain in the file for seven years. Paying off a debt does not mean that the mark will be erased.

Your daughter could ask again, but if an account has already been paid, there is little incentive for creditors to delete it. If it hasn't been paid, she might try to negotiate immediate payment in exchange for removing negative marks.

Her best bet is to build a new history by establishing favorable credit references, with timely payments. Experts suggest four active credit accounts with a clean payment history. This is not a quick fix, but recent history is the most important. The good references will eventually outweigh the negative ones.

Do you have a question for David?

Just log on to www.fightback.com and "Ask David." He will personally respond to your problem if you follow the instructions printed on his Web site. (Costco members receive a rebate off the normal fee.) Questions and answers of the greatest interest to Costco members will be used in this column with the permission of the contributor and will be posted on www.fightback.com.

Should illegal immigrants be granted amnesty?

With an estimated 11 million illegal immigrants now in the United States, immigration, always an emotional subject, has become a hot-button issue. While those on both sides of the issue favor stronger border security, President Bush wants a law that would grant temporary work permits to illegal immigrants. Opponents say this would amount to amnesty, and want to pass a bill that imposes criminal penalties on those who have entered the country illegally. Should illegal immigrants be granted amnesty? What do you think?



Find out more about this topic on the Web:

www.urban.org/immigrants/index.cfm

<http://aila.org>

www.immigration-usa.com/debate.html

www.nationofimmigrators.com

YES

from members:

Waleed Wynn
Chicago, IL



Many illegal immigrants have family here and are a positive part of their communities.

Richard Rodriguez
Yuma, AZ



They deserve the opportunity to start a new life.

Gladys Bobadille
Calexico, CA



It's not right that they're here illegally, yet they contribute to the economy. In the long run, everyone will benefit if they're allowed to stay and work.

NO

from members:

Joanne Tang
Phoenix, AZ



Legal Immigrants work very hard to become naturalized. If the illegal immigrants want this, let them do it legally like people are supposed to.

Bill Gumbo
Vancouver, WA



Granting illegal immigrants amnesty would not be fair to those immigrants who have followed the rules to become citizens.

Bob Altbaier
Mason, OH



They are illegal. Why should they be given a free pass?

from experts in the field:



Benjamin Powell, Ph.D., is the director of the Center on Entrepreneurial Innovation at the Independent Institute, an Oakland, California-based policy think tank.


ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS perform valuable roles in the U.S. economy. Instead of being criminalized, illegal immigrants should be granted amnesty and more legal channels should be opened so that future immigrants can migrate legally.

Illegal immigrants compose approximately 5 percent of America's labor force, and they are vitally important to a variety of industries. Approximately 24 percent of all farm workers, 17 percent of cleaning workers and 27 percent of butchery workers are illegal immigrants. The construction and textile industries are also heavily dependent on illegal immigrant labor. Reforms that risk losing these workers would cause a major disruption in the U.S. economy.

If migrants are deported, American workers won't automatically fill these jobs. Instead, many jobs will disappear because native-born workers refuse to take these low-wage jobs. It happened in Arizona in 2004, when increased border enforcement made it more difficult to attract migrant workers. The farmers suffered losses of nearly \$1 billion and left approximately two-thirds of the fall lettuce crop in the ground to rot instead of hiring American workers at higher wages.

The number of jobs in the American economy is not fixed. When more migrants come we create more jobs. The massive entry of women into America's workforce over the last 60 years did not decrease employment opportunities or wages for men. Instead, more jobs were created and America's economy has grown. The same is true when immigration increases the labor force.

Immigrants increase America's productivity by performing jobs that wouldn't otherwise exist and by freeing up American labor to move into more productive jobs. The result is increased output and lower prices for American citizens. Even by conservative estimates, U.S. citizens benefit by more than \$20 billion per year because of current levels of legal and illegal immigration.

Most tax, crime and social-services problems associated with immigrants stem from the illegal status of many of them. Criminalizing them and closing the border will not solve these problems. Legalizing current migrants and stemming the flow of illegal immigration by opening up more channels for legal migration would solve many problems and allow U.S. citizens to reap greater benefits from immigration. 

from experts in the field:



Dan Stein is president of FAIR (Federation for American Immigration Reform, www.fairus.org), a national, nonprofit organization.


PRESIDENT BUSH'S announcement that National Guard troops will be sent to patrol the border is but a baby step toward the type of comprehensive immigration enforcement strategy that the American public is demanding.

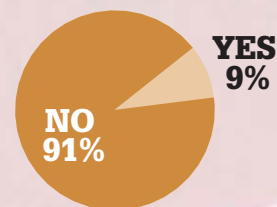
With American public opinion running overwhelmingly against President Bush's proposal to grant amnesty for 11 million or more illegal aliens and create a massive new guest worker program, the White House is clearly attempting to establish some measure of credibility for its promise that it will enforce immigration laws.

A real strategy to control illegal immigration to the United States, and to convince illegal aliens who are living here to leave, must have many more components to it. There needs to be a real effort to enforce laws against employers who hire illegal aliens, an end to nonessential services and benefits for illegal aliens and better coordination with state and local law-enforcement agencies.

Immigration enforcement with demonstrable results must be a prerequisite to any other policy changes. After years of government doing absolutely nothing to deal with this problem, the American public needs to see a real strategy implemented that results in illegal aliens getting discouraged and returning to their homelands in significant numbers.

Enforcement cannot be tied to amnesty for illegal aliens and a new guest worker program to satisfy the cheap-labor lobby. Amnesty is forever; immigration enforcement has been sporadic to nonexistent for too long for anyone to have confidence that the administration will carry through over the long haul.

If President Bush is serious about dealing with the illegal-immigration crisis, he will get behind the House of Representatives' enforcement bill, commit his administration to carrying out laws against illegal immigration and drop his call for granting amnesty to millions of illegal aliens. If he does that, polls show that he will have the support of the American people behind him. If all he is planning to do is send a few weekend soldiers down to the border for a few months, the American public will see it for what it is: an elaborate and expensive photo op. 



Opinions expressed are those of the individuals or organizations represented and are presented to foster discussion. Costco and *The Costco Connection* take no position on any Debate topic.



See Dialogue pages for more debate responses



Park Avenue Executive Office Suite

Featuring Mahogany and Pomele Bubinga Veneers

**Executive L Desk with Hutch.
Lateral File and Bookcase
are sold separately.**

Park Avenue Executive Desk with Hutch

L-configured desk includes a CPU storage compartment, three utility drawers, a fully extending file drawer, two lap/keyboard drawers and two pull-out writing boards. All drawers feature commercial-quality drawer slides. Hutch features open storage, two cabinets with two adjustable shelves each and center cabinet with curved glass doors, an adjustable shelf and canister light. Item #190679

L Desk: 68" W x 26" D x 30" H Left Desk with a
48.375" W x 21" D x 30" H Right Return

Hutch: 70.5" W x 16.5" D x 50" H

Lateral File

Two commercial-quality, centrally locking and fully extending file drawers accommodate letter and/or legal filing. Anti-tip device installed. Item #190499
36" W x 21" D x 30" H

Bookcase

Two-door cabinet, utility drawer and open storage with two adjustable shelves. Item #190509
36" W x 15" D x 76" H




All items feature a 12-step mahogany finish on a construction of mahogany and pomele bubinga veneers on birch solids with fluted pilasters and custom-designed hardware.



SHENANDOAH VALLEY FURNITURE

A ***Flexsteel*** Company



Ease your hiring
with an automated
hiring system

Hire-o-matic

By Mel Kleiman

MOST SMALL-BUSINESS OWNERS are far too busy handling everything from sales flyers to customer complaints to staffing schedules to become hiring experts.

Fortunately, help is at hand. Small-business owners can substantially lower the danger of making a bad hire by automating repetitive hiring tasks—and do it economically as well. Any business with a Web site and an answering machine can cost-effectively use automation to reduce hiring costs, increase applicant flow and eliminate unsuitable applicants. Automated systems work 24/7, saving time and money.

The first step in hiring better employees is spreading your job message to as many people as possible. The second is making it easy for people to apply when they can, which may well not be during your business hours, since the best employees usually already have a job. The third is eliminating applicants who don't meet your criteria.

Set up a hot line

Even the smallest company can develop a 24-hour job hot line using an answering machine or voice mail. Start by putting a 24-hour phone number in your ads. Then put a message similar to this on your answering device: "Thank you for calling. We appreciate your interest in working with us. Please leave your name, phone number, the best time for contacting you and a brief message about why you're interested in working for us, and we'll get back to you right away."

Set up an employment page on your Web site with an application that can be filled out and returned online, and include a snail-mail address for résumés. While some applicants may want to e-mail their résumé, the formatting is often lost in the process.

Be sure to post your job openings on local online job boards such as www.craigslist.org, many of which are free, and include a link to your Web site. (If you don't have a Web site, you should seriously consider getting one—a Web site sends the message that your company keeps pace with the times.)

Automate your criteria

Once you have established hiring criteria that match your hiring needs, automating those criteria is a cinch. It's also foolproof, since meeting them depends on verifiable facts, not candidate presentation. Asking applicants these questions in your application will save you time and energy, because the answers you get will determine whether or not you want to interview the applicant:

- What days and shifts are you available to work?
- What is your minimum salary requirement?
- Do you have a reliable way to get to work?
- How many days have you missed work in the last six months other than for being sick?
- How many times during the past year have you been late for work?
- Other than being personally sick, is there any reason you cannot be at work every single day on time?
- Are you on probation or preferred adjudication? Have you ever been convicted of a felony?
- If we offer you a job, are you willing to take a drug test today or no later than tomorrow?
- Are you willing to sign release forms that allow us to perform a criminal background check and verify all the references you provide?

If you hire more than 10 to 15 employees a year, consider adding interactive voice response, which can cost as little as \$100 a month if you use an automated hiring service (see "Recruiter-in-a-box").

The fewer employees a company has, the more important it is to hire the best people. If you have five employees and one is bad, that's 20 percent of your workforce. The people who work for your company are critical to its success, so doing a good job of recruiting and hiring can make all the difference. [E]

Mel Kleiman is a consultant on strategies for hiring and retaining the best hourly employees. He is also the author of Hire Tough, Manage Easy (Humetrics, Inc.). You can reach him at 1-800-218-0930 or www.melkleiman.com.

Recruiter-in-a-box

COSTCO MEMBER Reena Jadhav asked local business owners why they weren't recruiting via electronic job boards rather than poster board. She was told that electronic job boards took too much time and more than 50 percent of hourly workers don't use them.

What she learned led Jadhav to create My Recruiter, a virtual "recruiter-in-a-box" that posts job openings, accepts applications and screens applicants 24/7/365.

Implementing this service is JobFlash (www.jobflash.com), Jadhav's automated recruiting service that provides clients with a phone number and a Web site they can use on business cards, in ads and in links to their company Web site. Applicants check job openings and apply over the phone or on the Web. The system then schedules interview appointments for applicants who meet the business owner's prescreening requirements and provides automated status checks.

JobFlash currently provides recruiting services for businesses in more than 100 locations nationwide. The service charges a \$75-per-user monthly subscription fee plus an additional fee determined by the number of qualified applicants a business owner wants.

JobFlash is available for short time frames such as holiday hiring, but Jadhav says that subscribers become addicted because the system saves them an average of 10 to 15 hours a month. "Even when you're not hiring, people will still leave an application and ask to be notified when you have an opening," Jadhav says.

—MK

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LIMITED**

Queen Set

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California Item# 956011

**HAMPTON
COURT**

King Set & California King Set

Item# 956005 & 956006

California Item# 956013 (Cal King Only)



Silk & Wool Fiber

A refined blend of natural high-quality fibers that balances the firm feel of wool with luxurious softness of silk.



Convoluted SuperSoft SealyFoam™

A luxurious, deeply contoured foam that provides exceptional comfort and support.



Cashmere Cumuloft

A luxuriously plush, high-loft fiber that supports and cushions your body in cloud-soft comfort with the added luxury of cashmere.



Convoluted Memory Foam

Pressure relieving SpaceTech™ materials giving you unsurpassed conformance and comfort.

Fenway Limited Ultra Plush Features:

- PostureTech High Profile 782 (Q) Coil Unit
- Sealy Posturepedic Shock Abzzorber™ Plus Boxspring
- Sealy Posturepedic UniCased™ Edge and Base

Hampton Court Ultra Plush Features:

- PostureTech High Profile 986 (K) Coil Unit
- Sealy Posturepedic Shock Abzzorber™ Plus Boxspring
- Sealy Posturepedic UniCased™ Edge and Base

Available for Home Delivery at Special Order Kiosk or Costco.com

Qn #957629; Kg #957638; Cal Kg #957644 California Only Qn #957655; Kg #957659; Cal Kg #957666

INSPIRATIONS



- Queen Bed Item #958679
93¼" L x 66" W x 56" H
- California King Bed Item #188379
98" L x 78" W x 56" H
- Eastern King Bed Item #188409
94" L x 82" W x 56" H
- Night Stand Item #958678
28⅞" W x 22¾" D x 28½" H
- Armoire Item #958669
47" W x 23¾" D x 74¼" H
- Dressing Chest Item #958656
61⅞" W x 20" D x 52½" H

A perfect blend...

of elegance and glamour creates the Inspirations bedroom collection, available through Costco. Featuring mahogany veneer in a rich cognac finish, soft feminine shapes and stylish brushed-nickel hardware, this warm traditional collection is a must-have for those who enjoy lazy weekends under the covers.

Living room

Home theater seating
Area rug
Furniture
Futon for extra bedding

Bathroom

Towels
Fixtures
Spa basket

Bedroom

Bedding
Pillows
Furniture
Mattress

Outdoors

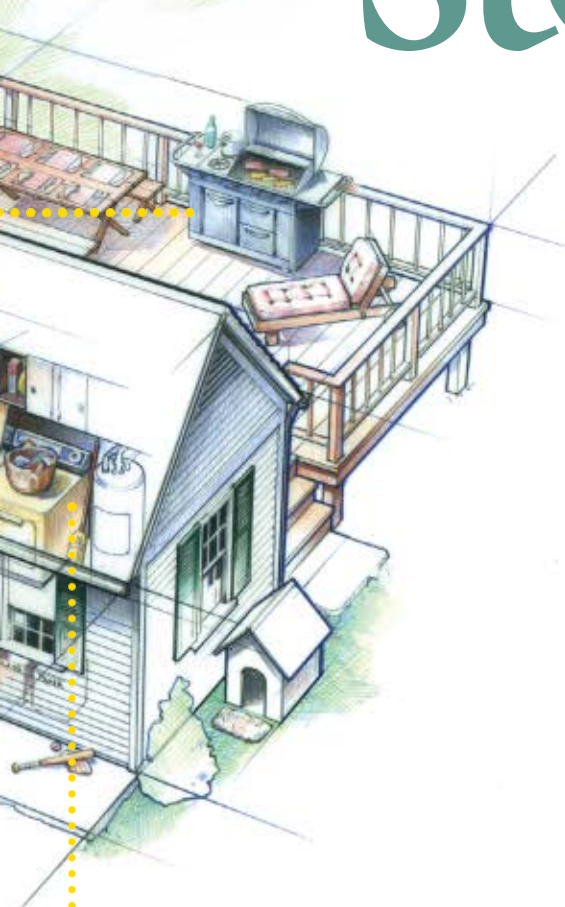
Patio furniture
Stainless steel grill
Outdoor fireplace
Spa

Kitchen

Appliances
Espresso machine
Food

The vacation-home store

Members outfit vacation homes in style and on budget



Laundry

- Washer and dryer
- Laundry detergent
- Cleaning supplies

MORE THAN 1 million people purchased vacation homes last year, according to data from the National Association of Realtors. From seacoast to woodland sanctuary, families are looking for their own special place to get away from it all.

But once the papers are signed and anticipation builds for that first weekend getaway, reality hits. You're ready for fun, but realize you have no furniture!

That's what happened to Costco members Robert and Mary Ann Pencak of Clinton Township, Michigan. "Once the closing was completed," Mary Ann writes, "we were faced with a completely empty home." Their solution: a trip to Costco.

The Pencaks were one of many members who responded to our query earlier this year about their vacation homes. Randy Dunning is building a cabin in the woods near Bend, Oregon, and Julie Wiens is having a log home built in western New Mexico. Philip and Doreen Kearney have a vacation house in southern Pennsylvania and a condo in Santa Barbara.

Regardless of the style of their vacation homes, members relied on Costco warehouses and costco.com to equip their outposts. And their tales weren't just about budgets. Responses were often about special items, such as outdoor fireplaces and spas, that reflect how people like to relax.

On the following pages, we share a few members' experiences in turning to Costco to furnish their getaways that may inspire some ideas for your vacation home.—*Anita Thompson*

PHOTO: DAVID JOHNSON



PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS:
DAVID SCHNEIDER

Home, sweet homes

OPERATING A bed-and-breakfast inn in Chico, California, made pulling all the necessary elements together that much easier when David and Joan Johnson needed to create their own vacation escape.

"We knew right where to go," says Joan.

Perusing the local Costco in Chico, where the Johnsons shop to supply Johnson's Country Inn, Joan picked out all the items they'd need for their Gold Beach, Oregon, getaway—furniture for the living room, dining room, bedroom, kitchen and deck; appliances; cooking utensils; and linens and towels.

Then, shopping list in hand, with a truck and rented trailer, she and her husband drove 30 miles north to the Costco in Medford, Oregon, the warehouse closest to their vacation home, and shopped. And shopped. And shopped.

"People were looking at all our baskets and carts," says Joan. "We had bar stools and rockers, TVs, microwaves, a refrigerator, coffee makers and toasters, not to mention all the other items."

With the two vehicles absolutely stuffed, they made the four-hour drive to their new place, dubbed The Sandpiper, and lined their new vacation nest.

"Since then, we've also purchased lawn furniture," reports Joan, who says they stay at The Sandpiper about four times a year. "We bought it in Chico, strapped it on top of the truck and drove all the way to Oregon."—*T. Foster Jones*

Regardless of how they outfitted their vacation homes, members said that Costco warehouses and **costco.com** saved them money.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TIM AND JULIE BALES

Destination anywhere

IN JULY 2004, Tim and Julie Bales of Jacksonville, Florida, bought Slow Lane, their dream vacation home—a 43-foot Hatteras double-cabin motor yacht. The Baleses say that, for now, they mostly enjoy their home on the water on weekends, often cruising 100 miles south to St. Augustine. But when they retire in a few years, they plan on visiting dry-land destinations between Slow Lane voyages.

"When we purchased her, she was docked in Fort Myers, Florida," explains Julie. "Before we made our 415-mile maiden voyage around the tip of Florida to a dock in Jacksonville, we visited the local Costco warehouse to equip our new home away

from home with essentials such as a surround-sound stereo and television, swimwear, deck shoes, sunglasses and enough food for a small army."

After a week on the water, the Baleses arrived in Jacksonville, where they docked Slow Lane. "When we arrived home," Julie says, "we headed back to Costco to outfit our new haven with décor items such as area rugs, throw pillows and memory-foam mattresses." Through Costco, the Baleses furnished their yacht, which has two bathrooms and sleeps six, with nearly every convenience any other home has, plus some unusual staples such as foul-weather suits, an air compressor and a GPS system.—*Will Fifield*



Sweet home, Alabama

IN 2004, David and Terry Crutchfield began construction on their vacation home on Smith Lake, Alabama, about an hour-and-a-half drive from their residence in Birmingham.

"We became Costco members in 2005, just as our vacation home was being completed," Terry says. "The house has seven bedrooms, so we had a lot of house to furnish. We couldn't have been happier to discover the savings we get through Costco, and we save on the kind of products we wanted for the house. For example, nearly everyone who visits the house comments on how comfortable the beds are. In fact, we are planning on buying mattresses from Costco for our main home now."

When they're not on the lake in their boat or on waterskis, the Crutchfields enjoy watching movies on a plasma TV and entertaining guests. "My 12- and 6-year-old sons always have friends along, so we bring plenty of food," Terry says. "We recently served a large ham along with other gourmet breakfast foods for a group of friends at the lake house, and almost everything came from Costco."

"Though we have spent thousands of dollars at the Hoover [Alabama] Costco, we have saved lots of money equipping our lake house, from towels and kitchen items to cleaning supplies, with the kind of things that make vacations a real pleasure."—WF

Cabin fever

BILL MAY, a Costco member in Seattle, knows a little about furnishing a vacation home.

In 1999, he and his family purchased a house on a popular lake in central Washington state. They decided to rent out the house when they weren't using it, and outfitted it with supplies and furniture from Costco.

That house worked out so well as a rental that May purchased several other vacation rental homes in Washington and in Hawaii. He also went into the business of sales and management services for other owners, building a portfolio of 100 homes through his Web site, www.sunspots.info.

"Outfitting a home from scratch can cost \$10,000 to \$30,000, and we estimated that we spent at least half of that at Costco," May says. "We even buy all our cleaning supplies, paper products and more there. It's a great one-stop shop for vacation homes."

Among the top items on his shopping list: beach towels ("We buy truckloads as we outfit the homes"), hot tubs and furniture, particularly futons, which can comfortably transform a living room into sleeping quarters.

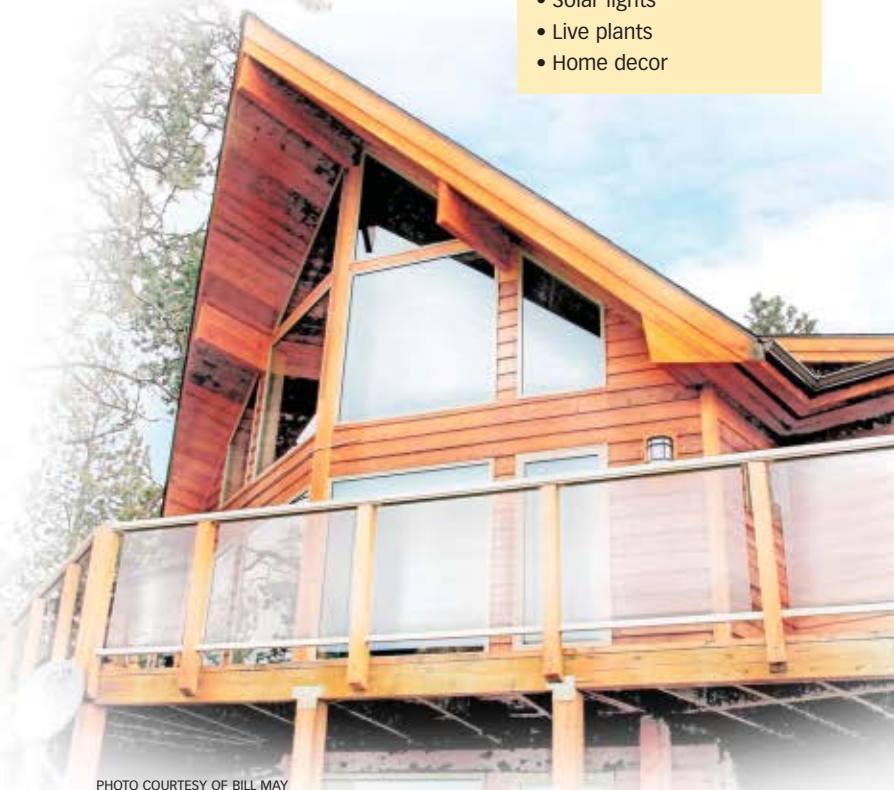
"Yes, we could have done it all without Costco, but it would have cost more, taken longer and we would have to search high and low to match the quality," May says. "We'll be using Costco as we expand into other markets."—Tim Talevich

PHOTO COURTESY OF BILL MAY


The Costco vacation-home shopping list

NEED HELP IN planning for your vacation home essentials? Listed below are just a few of the products and services available at Costco. Some items, such as patio furniture, are only in warehouses on a seasonal basis. At costco.com you'll find thousands of unique items available for home delivery with white-glove service, perfect for large, bulky items.

- Real estate services
- Home owners insurance
- Refrigerators
- Vacuum cleaners
- Leather furniture
- Dining furniture
- Flooring
- Lighting
- Generators
- Ceiling and floor fans
- Televisions
- Home audio systems
- Satellite radio and GPS
- Kayaks and pedal boats
- Water towables
- Water slides and trampolines
- Camping equipment
- Solar lights
- Live plants
- Home decor



NORTH RIVER GALLERY
— CONTEMPORARY ART —



Rich Dimensional Triptics.
Create your own collection
or buy individual pieces.
Item #934879

as beautiful
as it is
functional



The Rodine armchair is hand carved with
oversize proportions and is ideal for any den
or library. Stately in design, it features a square
back and intricate detailing, and luxurious
genuine leather seating finished off with
a custom nailhead trim. Item #930103



accent
your home.

The hand-carved solid wood Milano
accent bench features top-grain
leather, a hand-finished walnut
stain and is fully assembled.
Item #945204



Inspirations Mahogany Plasma/ LCD Lift Cabinet



- Rich mahogany finish with crotch mahogany veneer accents
- Constructed from hardwoods and premium veneers and protected by hand-applied 11-step finish
- Center storage compartment with wood or speaker-mesh door panels for surround-sound speaker placement.
- Ample storage for home theater components
- Store DVDs and videos in slide-out media trays
- Built-in curio-cabinet with accent lighting
- Interchangeable curio-cabinet door panels: wood, glass and speaker mesh (included)

Item #130639



Item# 929449

Versailles Demilune Console

A Touch of European Refinement

- Crafted from alder wood solids with primavera, olive ash burl and mahogany veneers.
- Beautifully designed decorative doors conceal adjustable shelves in each cabinet, allowing for a variety of storage options.
- Keeler solid brass hardware.
- Fancy face veneers in a beautiful pattern on the console top and drawer interiors with French dovetail construction.

44" W x 20" D x 36" H

SHENANDOAH VALLEY FURNITURE
A *Flexsteel* Company



Versatile style



Florence Chaise Lounge

Sturdy wood frame | Walnut-inspired wood finish | Plush foam seat | Matching accent pillow | Non-marring foot glides | Easy to assemble—no tools required

Item #930078



Elegant and Comfortable

PALM BEACH ACCENT ARMCHAIR

Perfect for any setting, this elegant accent chair features tasteful traditional styling with gracefully curved cabriole legs and interlaced carvings.

Constructed of select hardwood solids with a rich, warm cherry finish, this delightful chair is upholstered with a rich floral fabric on the seat back and 100% aniline-dyed natural leather on the seat, all accented with brass nailhead trim.

Of equal importance, this beautiful chair features web construction for added comfort.

26" L x 28" D x 42" H



Item #930034





"...where you always know what's cooking!"™

Sonoma Steward Wine Barrister

Keep your wine organized in Classic style, the Sonoma Steward wine barrister is a handsome cabinet that fits naturally into any wine connoisseurs decor.

- Lift up barrister glass doors
- Removable bottle dividers
- Full width top drawer for added storage
- Lit upper cabinet with mirror
- Lightly distressed black rub through finish
- Stores up to 60 bottles of wine

kathy ireland.
HOME

Solution
by
MARTIN

Distributed by Kathy Ireland Home by Martin.
Kathy Ireland HOME by Martin Furniture
is an authorized manufacturer for
Kathy Ireland Worldwide, Inc.

Item #943229



Jamestown

Leather Chair and Ottoman

- Crafted of 100% genuine top-grain leather on all surfaces
- No vinyl or splits
- Large, well-padded arms and a deep seat
- Item #945203

DIMENSIONS:

Chair: 40" W x 38" D x 38" H

Seat Height: 20"; Arm Height: 27"

Ottoman: 24½" W x 21" D x 18½" H



TOP GRAIN COWHIDE LEATHER

LAYERED COMFORT
COLLECTION

- Supple Top Grain Blackberry Leather, featuring generous layered body cushions
- Ergo-Contoured lumbar form provides exceptional comfort and support
- Soft leather upholstered arm cushions are designed for comfort
- Ottoman with layered cushion construction for your greater comfort
- Recline mechanism adjusts and locks to fit your comfort needs
- Recliner swivels 360 degrees on a heavy duty Espresso finished wood base

True Comfort

Soft Ergo-Layered Body Cushions for the ultimate in relaxation

Deep, rich Top Grain Blackberry Leather recliner on a durable Espresso finished wood base



Item 932788



True Seating Concepts
Innovative Seating Solutions

Recliner and Ottoman shown are covered by the following U.S. Patent: D459,917

Java Urban Loft 60" Console



- The console will fit up to 60" plasma, DLP or LCD TVs
- Interchangeable center door panels: Glass provides remote-control access to media components; speaker mesh creates integrated home-theater audio compartments; wood covers discreet storage cabinets.
- Slide-out media trays hold DVDs, CDs and VHS tapes
- Low-profile design positions TV at the proper height for optimum viewing and complements the wide styling of modern televisions.
- Fully assembled

Item #950401



StyleCraft Home Collections

"Revere" Silver
Plated Finish

"Nadeen Red"
Bell Shades

On/Off Switch

Glass Accents

Overall Height
Approx. 36"

Item #927435



"VENETO" BUFFET LAMP 2-PACK

BIRMINGHAM HAND PAINTED ACCENT TABLE



- Exquisite gold hand paint details on a rich rubbed black finish
- Solid wood top with maple veneers
- Curved door provides ample storage space while smaller wood drawer allows for little items to be safely tucked away
- Quality details such as fluted legs and delicately raised floral pattern throughout
- Item size:
17-5/8" W x 14-5/16" D x 32-1/8" H
(44.8cm W x 36.4cm D x 81.6cm H)

ITEM #: 928436



ISLANDS HALL CHEST

Bring a touch of the West Indies to your home with this delightful hall chest. Constructed of hardwood solids and veneers, this beautifully shaped chest is highlighted by an intricate parquet veneer top and a rich, two-tone hand-painted finish with a distinctive "islands" motif. Designed with a 12" depth to require minimum floor space, this handsome chest features a spacious drawer above two large doors that open to provide access to an adjustable shelf.



Item #930933



Enjoy a life of comfort.

Enrich your life and your home with the Genoa leather collection. The dual reclining sofa and love seat offer unparalleled style without sacrificing comfort. This beautifully crafted furniture features hand-applied nailhead trim, decorative stitching, pub-style back and rolled arms. Item #962517 (sofa), #962522 (loveseat)



a touch of Tuscany



Tuscany Counter Stool

- 24-inch (61 cm) counter height seat • 8-step hand-finish • Top-grain leather upholstery • Soft foam seat and back cushions • Metal scuff guard on footrest • Non-marring foot slides • Fully assembled • Item #994717



BUCKLEY OCCASIONAL TABLES



Item #930679

Individually handcrafted of solid hardwood, artisans employ an old-world technique of cross planing the tops to give the "Buckley" tables a uniquely honed surface. Finished in a dark oak stain, the tables feature a timeless style.



Item #930659



Item #757511



The Santa Cruz Entertainment System

Designed to accommodate plasma, LCD and DLP TVs up to 60"



- Constructed of oak and oak veneers in a burnished finish with antique-style seeded-glass panels.
- Three cabinets, each with two adjustable shelves.
- Cable-accessible back panel.
- Mounting-capable back panel
- Item # 929456

72" W x 20" D x 75" H



SHENANDOAH VALLEY FURNITURE
A *Flexsteel* Company





Realm of the senses

Designing a room
with more than
just sight in mind

By Gretchen Roberts

YOU'RE FINALLY RENOVATING the family room and can't wait to get rid of the old saggy sofas and paneled walls from your just-married days and turn the space into something really special. You're dreaming of calm, serene colors and furniture that invites relaxation at the end of the day. Naturally, you're thinking about how the room will look.

People tend to think visually when choosing new furniture, painting the walls and coordinating accessories, says Chris Barrett, owner of Chris Barrett Design Inc. in Santa Monica, California.

But don't make the mistake of relying solely on the looks of a room. Human beings have five sophisticated senses, not just one. "When you're designing you want to create a feeling," Barrett explains. "It's not just a chair. It's your environment, the overall experience you have when you walk into a room."

Just as a good chef will use a variety of colors, textures and tastes in a signature dish, so should you think holistically when planning the ambience of your décor. Consider touch, smell, sound and taste in addition to sight when decorating and you'll have a beautiful, sensual room.

Let there be sight

The color scheme is the most important and most personal aspect of a room. "Color preference is specific to the individual," says Sharon Hanby-Robie, a Pennsylvania-based interior designer and author of *Beautiful Places, Spiritual Spaces* (Northfield Press, 2004). "But we do have some basic formulas. Yellow is refreshing, red and orange make us hungry and certain greens and blues are calming."

Patterns and furniture lines are important visual elements. A striped cushion on an angular Mission-style chair conveys a modern, pared-down look compared to a pretty floral fabric on a cushy sofa reflected in an ornate mirror.

Two often-overlooked aspects of visual décor are light and clutter. "Natural light is really important, and at night you need several kinds of light—both overhead and ambient—to make a room successful. Bad lighting can ruin a room, but great lighting can make an ordinary room sing," Barrett says.

Clutter is a negative aspect that is barely noticed in day-to-day life. "One client told me her Christmas ornaments were still on





PHOTOS: PHOTODISC

Putting it all together

CREATING A SENSUAL ROOM is more than just adding a ticking clock or a silky bedspread to otherwise blah décor, though that's a good start. "You have to decide from the beginning how you want it to feel," says Chris Barrett, owner of Chris Barrett Design Inc. in Santa Monica, California.

Pick a mood, like bright and exciting or calm and relaxing, and incorporate sensual details from there, says interior designer and author Sharon Hanby-Robie. "If you want to spice up the bedroom, get rid of the treadmill and use colors and items that elicit a passionate emotional response."

You don't have to have an element that appeals to each sense in every room, however. The kitchen is a natural haven for smells and tastes, while a home office is the perfect spot to integrate pleasing sounds and a visually stimulating environment. Silky, sensual fabrics are ideal in the bedroom, while the bathroom invites soothing sounds and scents.

Just don't get caught up in decorating for looks only. "The most appealing and aesthetically pleasing rooms appeal to all the senses, because we are sensual people," Hanby-Robie says. "Whether we're aware of it or not, we respond with all our senses, not just sight, so we should decorate with intent and purpose."—GR

Making scents of aromas

As with clutter, people rarely notice the smells in their own homes, so before you pull out the scented candles, make sure you're not just masking a bad odor. Hanby-Robie advises her clients to walk in their front doors (since most people come in through a garage or back door), stand there and smell the house as a visitor might. If there's an odor, whether it's cat litter or a musty closet, work on eliminating the bad smell before introducing aromatics.

Classic sources of scents include candles and flowers, but Barrett encourages you to get creative when planting scents—literally. "Plant a fragrant vine like jasmine outside a window, or use pots of herbs like rosemary and lavender throughout the house," she suggests.

Natural materials, such as a leather sofa or the naturally fragrant fibers in a seagrass rug, are perfect sources of scents.

Visual triggers help create scents in the mind, Hanby-Robie says. "Do something as simple as putting out a bowl of fresh lemons in the kitchen," she suggests. "You may not actually smell them, but they will create a clean, fresh scent in your mind."

Make sure you tailor the scent to the room. "You wouldn't want lemons in the bedroom. Use something therapeutic or romantic in there, like lavender or spices," she says.

I hear you

Many sounds in the home, from the humming refrigerator to the drone of cars outside, are subconscious. "I always talk about taking the time to listen to the sounds of your home," Hanby-Robie says. "Are they generally joyful? If not, how can we fix them?"

More people are using hard surfaces in décor, which creates reverberations. Barrett says whether or not you want that sound is an individual preference. "Some people like

the sound of walking on stone floors, but if you don't, use pads under carpets to absorb the noise," she advises.

Barrett likes to use the outdoors to create sounds inside. "I've put fountains outside windows and made gravel paths so you can hear the crunching when someone walks up. It's a nice sound that creates a good feeling."

Wind chimes are another outdoor secret heard indoors, or you could try the newer solar chimes, which have a sun panel and work indoors.

In the house, music, aquariums, a collection of gently ticking clocks and tabletop water fountains do double duty by masking the noises of the house and providing pleasing sounds.

In good taste

The sense of taste is the most difficult to accomplish in home décor. In her book *Interior Designing for All Five Senses*, Catherine Bailly Dunne uses what she calls the "candy dish theory," which is putting something in each room that tickles the taste buds (even if you don't actually eat it). From bowls of espresso beans to jars of lemon drops and groupings of olive oil and vinegars, each room in your home can contain something that evokes the sense of taste, even if you're not actually eating.

Hanby-Robie goes back to the bowl of lemons in the kitchen. "Just as you can smell the lemons by looking at them, you can taste them too," she explains. "You're not really eating your rooms, but you are savoring them." ☐

the floor months later, but that she'd learned to just walk around them," Hanby-Robie says. "I take a photograph of the room for my clients, and they usually shriek. They have no idea how much has accumulated until they see it on paper."

Tactile pleasures

"We are tactile by nature," Hanby-Robie says. "I noticed early in my career that when I gave clients fabric samples they would instinctively rub them on their cheeks."

Catering to the sense of touch means thinking about textures. From a silky throw in the bedroom to chunky tiles lining the shower wall, different textures and finishes have individual appeal. Hanby-Robie says closing your eyes and touching fabrics, the wood on a chair or the surface of a pillow will let you feel what's good by the sensation it evokes.

Barrett advises combining textures that contrast. "There are different scales of texture," she says. "A really big plant or a large woven fabric looks and feels different than a finely woven fabric or delicate plant. Putting them together is a nice contrast."

The Costco Connection

During the month of July, Costco warehouses carry an array of furniture and décor items that appeal to all five senses. To see the furniture buyer's "Buyer's Pick," turn to page 35.

Gretchen Roberts is a Tennessee-based food, home and garden writer who recently redecorated her office in a soothing botanical green with prints of ripe grape clusters on the walls.



Monaco Round Mirror

The **Monaco Round Mirror** is a transitional mirror designed to suit either a contemporary or a traditional living space.

Each mirror is hand-finished for a stylish look. This elegant design is enhanced by beveled glass and is available in four colors:

**A. Brown & Gold B. Black & Silver
C. Dark Cherry D. Champagne Silver**

All hanging hardware is included.

Designed in the U.K.

Overall size: approx. 36" diameter

Item #111269

Gallery



This sturdy bar set features numerous architectural highlights, including dramatic molding, hand-carving and striking starburst veneer, all hand-finished in a meticulous 11-step process that creates a real lasting beauty.

- Durable construction features birch solids and cherry veneers
- Polished brown marble top
- Hanging storage for glasses
- Locking liquor cabinet
- Built-in wine rack
- 5 utility drawers
- Hand-carved leather seats
- Easy to assemble

Item #989726



Entertain in rich
Mediterranean style
with the Sevilla Bar Set



= available at most warehouses

Buyer's. pick

FRANCE FREEMAN



Deirdre Bondarev
Costco furniture buyer

EVER WONDER WHY everyone gravitates to the kitchen during a party?

I think it has to do with the counters: They're good for leaning on and provide a place to set a plate or glass.

To draw people out of the kitchen and into a more spacious area of your home, I'd like to suggest a gathering table. The hottest trend in dining, these counter-height tables are the perfect place to gather for dinner, a game night or working on crafts and hobbies.

Another advantage of gathering tables is that their height—the one I've selected is 36 inches tall—allows peo-

ple to sit down and get up from the table with less effort.

The Buyer's Pick dining set, which includes a table and six chairs, comes from one of the first makers of gathering tables. The tabletop measures 48 by 48 inches and expands to 66 inches with a self-storing butterfly leaf. The table features a cherry-finish top and an antique black finish on the legs.

The seven-piece set is currently available in most Costco warehouses.



Dalton Floor Lamp

- Wood and antique bronze metal base
- Adjustable arm and shade • Overall height approx. 51.5" • Some assembly required
- Item #929646

= available at most warehouses



ERICA COLLECTION

For more information contact:
CafeKid.com or
info@cafekid.com

- For ages 3 to adult
- Constructed of solid hardwood and select veneers
- Rich hand-carved floral wood molding
- Full-extension drawer glides
- Dovetailed drawer construction
- Trundle can be used as a bed or a spacious storage drawer



Dresser
Item #963126

Bookcase
Item #970604

Twin Trundle Bed
Item #994722

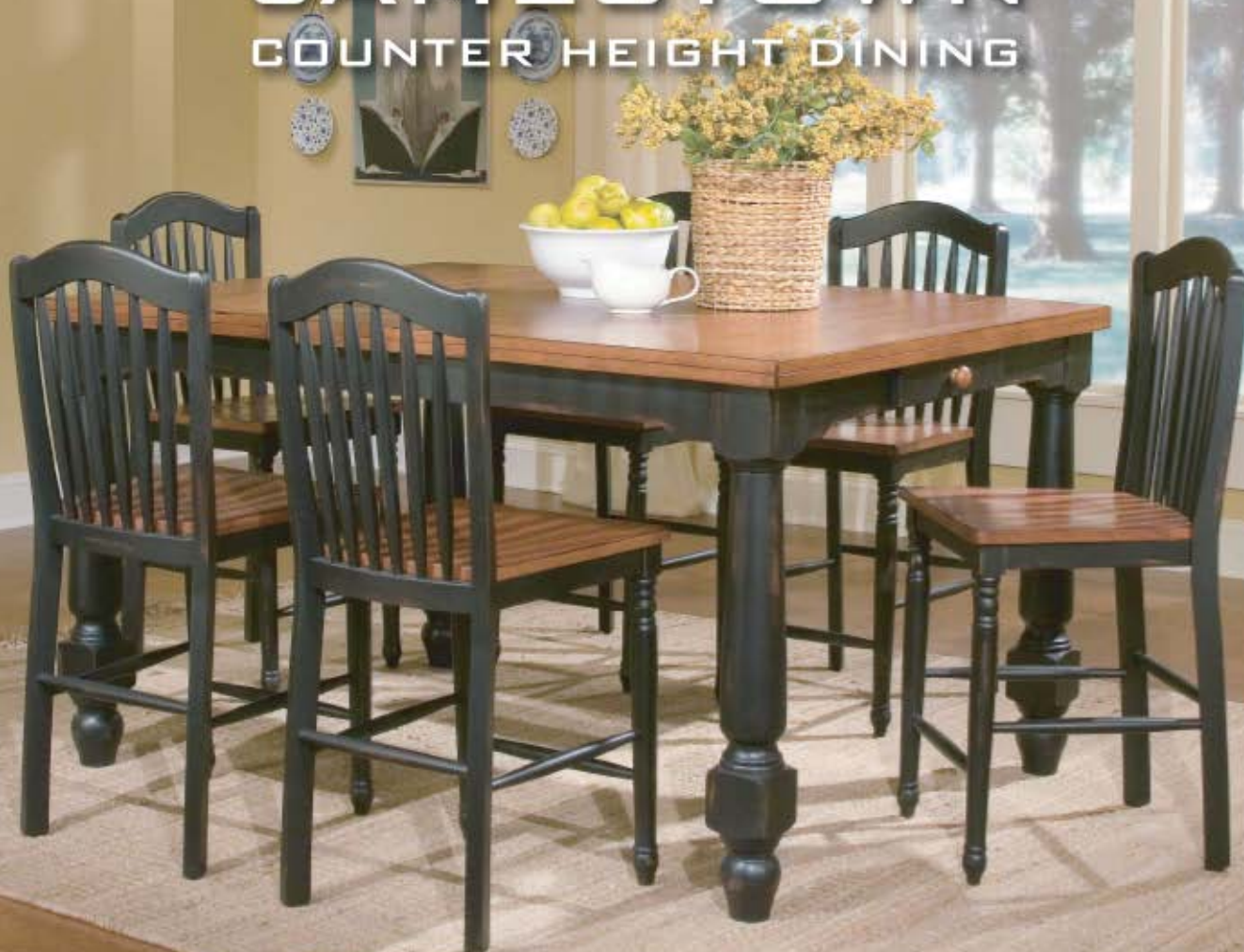
Vanity Desk
and Chair Set
Item #994724

+ = available at most warehouses and costco.com

Product may not be available in all locations.

JAMESTOWN

COUNTER HEIGHT DINING




TABLETOP MEASURES 66" X 48" WITH LEAF.
48" SQUARE WITHOUT LEAF.
TABLE HEIGHT 36-5/8". EASY TO ASSEMBLE

CHAIR DIMENSIONS
18-3/8" L X 20-3/8" W X 42-1/8" H
CHAIRS FULLY ASSEMBLED



- * SEVEN-PIECE JAMESTOWN COUNTER HEIGHT DINING SET
- * SELF STORING BUTTERFLY LEAF
- * CHERRY & ANTIQUE BLACK FINISH
- * SOLID HARDWOOD CONSTRUCTION
- * METAL TO METAL FITTINGS

ITEM #832357

 - available at most warehouses



Pasta perfect

IRIDIO PHOTOGRAPHY

It's good, healthful and easy to make

WHAT'S SO PERFECT about pasta? Where to begin ...

For starters, pasta serves as an excellent complement to so many other foods, whether they be garden-fresh sauces, fish, meat or poultry, cheese or even just a sprinkling of spices and extra virgin olive oil.

Then there's nutritional value. Pasta is a good source of complex carbohydrates (the "good" carbs), as well as B vitamins, iron and niacin. A half-cup serving of cooked spaghetti contains just 99 calories and barely any fat or sodium.

Last, consider price (low) and preparation (very easy), and the picture becomes clear: Pasta tastes great, and can be part of a healthful diet.

Find out for yourself. This recipe appeared in *Creative Cooking The Costco Way*, our latest cookbook. An electronic version of the cookbook can be found at costco.com, under "Costco cookbook."

—Tim Talevich

Penne all'Arrabbiata

3 medium garlic cloves, divided

3 tablespoons olive oil, divided

2 tablespoons tomato paste

1 28-ounce can whole tomatoes in juice, chopped

1 McCormick* bay leaf

1 tablespoon McCormick* Gourmet Collection Organic parsley flakes, plus more for garnish

1 tablespoon McCormick* Gourmet Collection Organic basil leaves, plus more for garnish

1/2 teaspoon McCormick* crushed red pepper

1/4 cup white wine

1 teaspoon salt

1 pound Garofalo* penne rigate pasta, cooked according to package directions

Freshly grated Parmesan cheese (optional)

1. Chop 1 garlic clove. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a 3-quart saucepan over medium heat. Add chopped garlic and cook for 30 seconds.
2. Add tomato paste and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Add tomatoes in juice and bay leaf; simmer, uncovered, for 30 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, thinly slice remaining 2 garlic cloves. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium heat. Add garlic and cook for 30 seconds, until just beginning to turn pale gold.
4. Add parsley, basil and crushed red pepper; cook for 30 seconds. Add wine and boil for 30 seconds. Stir into the tomato mixture; add salt and simmer for 4 to 5 minutes.
5. Toss sauce with hot pasta in a large serving bowl. Drizzle with remaining 1 tablespoon oil. Serve with Parmesan and garnish with additional parsley and basil, if desired. Makes 4 servings.

*Brands vary by region; substitute a similar product.

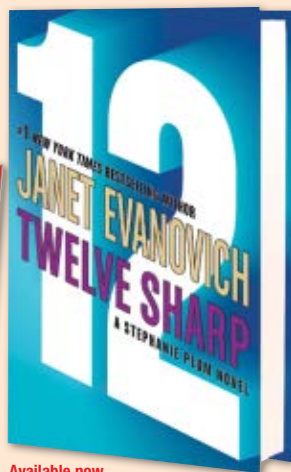
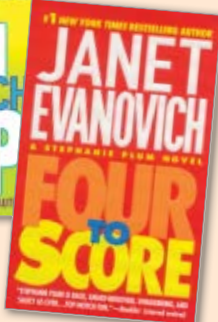
ONLINE! BONUS!

More recipes featuring products from Garofalo, McCormick and other Costco suppliers can be found in the July *Online Edition* at costco.com under "Costco magazine."



Available now

Available early July



Available now

America's favorite bounty-hunter heroine, Stephanie Plum, is once again struggling with her crazy love life and chaotic family in **Twelve Sharp**, the latest installment in Janet Evanovich's bestselling series.

Don't miss **Eleven on Top**, now in paperback. Stephanie has decided to quit her job as a bounty hunter and pursue a more normal life. And just when she thinks she's out, they pull her back in!

You can get pulled into all of the books in the immensely popular Stephanie Plum series, including **Hard Eight**, **High Five** and many more—now in paperback!

ST. MARTIN'S PRESS/ST. MARTIN'S PAPERBACKS / HARDCOVER/PAPERBACK

In Phillip Margolin's new thriller, **Proof Positive**, he presents the idea that forensic evidence can be faked, especially in the hands of a coldhearted killer.

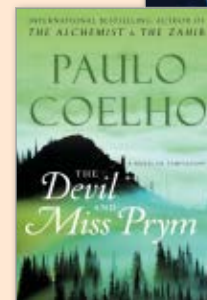
HARPERCOLLINS / HARDCOVER

A stranger wanders into an isolated mountain town and exposes a community of greed and cowardice in Paulo Coelho's story of good versus evil, **The Devil and Miss Prym**.

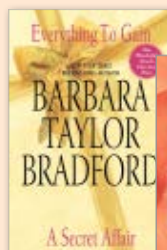
HARPERCOLLINS / HARDCOVER



Available now



On sale July 3



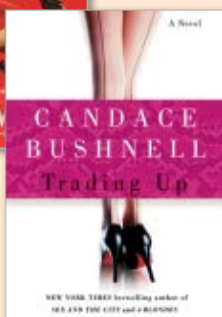
Available now



Now you can get two great novels inside one book, including **Someday Soon** and **Sooner or Later** by Debbie Macomber, **Everything to Gain** and **A Secret Affair** by Barbara Taylor Bradford and more.

AVON / PAPERBACK

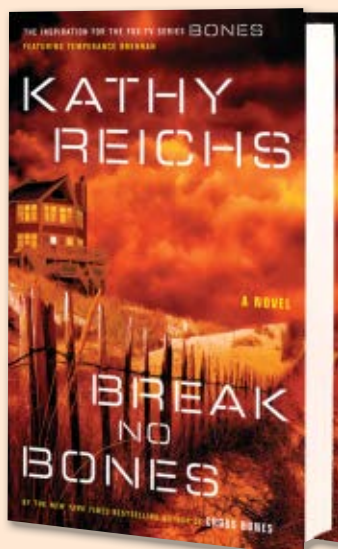
Heat up your summer with these great books!



Available mid-July

Get a taste of the champagne lifestyle with these breezy chick-lit reads featuring characters in high society. You can always hire another housekeeper, but if you find a good colorist, you'd better hold on for dear life, in **Beyond the Blonde**. The glamorous magazine biz can really be murder, in **Over Her Dead Body**. And don't miss Candace Bushnell's **Trading Up**. These titles and many more are now available in paperback.

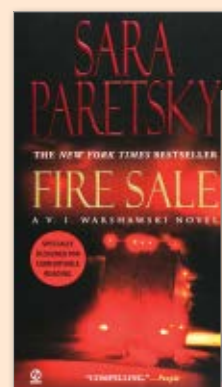
HYPERION/WARNER / PAPERBACK



On sale July 11

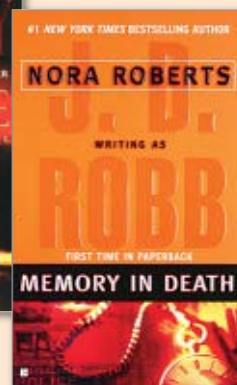
Kathy Reichs, real-life forensic scientist, bestselling author and the inspiration for the hit TV series **Bones**, heats up the summer with her highly anticipated new thriller, **Break No Bones**.

SCRIBNER / HARDCOVER



SIGNET, A MEMBER OF THE PENGUIN GROUP (USA), INC. / PAPERBACK

Available early July



BERKLEY, A MEMBER OF THE PENGUIN GROUP (USA) INC. / PAPERBACK

Available now

When V.I. Warshawski turns to a big retail company in order to procure some much-needed funds for a girls' basketball team, she stumbles upon the chain's dark secrets—secrets they need kept quiet—in **Fire Sale**. Lieutenant Eve Dallas is a tough cop, but she walks a fine line between her grueling profession and her private demons. When someone from Eve's past attempts to blackmail her, she must put her personal feelings aside to get the job done, in **Memory in Death**.

His house of sky

The dying West lives on in Ivan Doig's works

By Diana Jordan

"I AM BY PERSONALITY, but also by training, a person to whom details are sacred," Ivan Doig tells *The Connection*. "The telling detail, the crystallizing detail ... those are vital to me, to the stories I've been telling." This is noteworthy in a journalist turned memoirist turned novelist.

For decades Doig has been jotting down details, poignant observations, intriguing phrases and words with a particular flair into 3-by-5-inch notebooks he stuffs into the well-worn front pockets of his shirts, later weaving them lyrically into magazine articles, two memoirs and eight books of fiction, to date.

Despite his austere upbringing on Montana ranches, "my eyes were in love with words early on," Doig says. He had a clue his path would take a different direction from his classmates and fellow ranch hands during his junior year in high school, when he dropped out of Future Farmers of America and instead took typing and Latin.

The memoir for which Doig is most known, *This House of Sky*, this month's book buyer's pick, was years away yet, but the budding journalist came of age early. He credits the experience of being the "only child around adults—on ranches or the people I was living with in town to go to school while my father and grandmother were working and cooking on ranches—and I think it set the knack for standing back and eavesdropping with my eyes, [and] fed into my ultimate imagination as a writer."

As for his fiction, the latest of which is *The Whistling Season*, "I make up my characters and my plots as wholeheartedly as I can." Challenged recently to count the number of characters in his fiction, Doig figures he's approaching 450, and he has dossiers on each—what they look like, how they speak, how they wear their hats.

"I'm a writer in every pore of my being," says Doig, who now lives in Seattle. He applauds his good fortune of marrying Carol, another graduate of the Northwestern University School of Journalism, 41 years ago. Happily for him, she was willing to take a steady job, as a professor, while he began his career as a newspaper journalist, then as a freelance magazine writer. Doig credits his wife for inspiring him: "Strong women are in my work."

Casting about for freelance topics in the late '60s—and with Carol's support—Doig was pro-

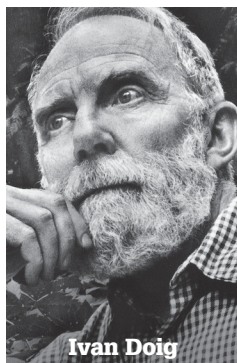
pelled by two strong notions. First, he sensed that his father and grandmother were a vanishing breed. He dubbed his family "lariat proletariats," never far enough up in the world to own land, only to work it. So he pulled out his tape recorder and let his dad tell his stories and his grandmother let loose her "river of proverbs."

"You could tell, even then, that that generation, born on a homestead and growing up cowboying and sheepherding and general ranch work—that was vanishing, it was already vanishing," he says, "and I could feel it vanishing from beneath me by the time I was a summer ranch hand in Montana, piling bales of hay and doing other farm and ranch chores. Mechanization was going to do us in."

At the same time, another force propelled Doig to write his family's story: Watergate. It was a time, he rails, that "every Nixonian co-conspirator, indicted or otherwise, was getting a book contract." He wanted to show the world that "there are stories of common, more honorable families and individuals in this country who also deserve to have their own books." *This House of Sky*, his debut book, which was published in 1980, was a hit, praised for its unique brand of storytelling.

While writing, Doig says, he faces the corner of the room and reads passages aloud—an old broadcast journalist's trick—to hear how the rhythm sounds. He wants his books to have a lyrical expression while they tell a story. He also wants his readers to take away "the sense that the human story and the family story can be told in loving language that is also an art." ☐

Diana Jordan (www.dianajordan.net) interviews authors for TV, the Web, radio and print.



MARION EITLINGER

Ivan Doig



Pennie's
pick



Pennie Clark Iannicello
Costco Book Buyer

ORIGINALLY published in 1978, Ivan Doig's memoir—and this month's pick—*This House of Sky: Landscapes of a Western Mind* was immediately hailed as an example of masterful writing. I don't hesitate to call it an American classic.

Doig begins his story on his sixth birthday and leads readers through his youth in rugged Montana as he's raised by his father and grandmother—among sheepherders, ranchers and denizens of small-town saloons.

He explores how the landscape and early familial bonds can't help but shape people as they grow and begin their search for love, family and independence.

Doig's *This House of Sky* is available in most Costco warehouses and at costco.com. ☐

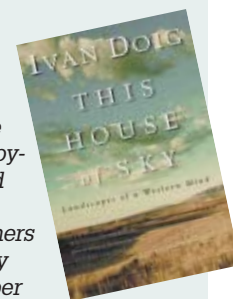
Signed book giveaway

COSTCO HAS 10 signed copies of Ivan Doig's *This House of Sky* to give away.

To enter, print your name, membership number, address and daytime phone number on a postcard or letter and send it to: *This House of Sky, The Costco Connection*, P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088; or fax it to (425) 313-6718.

No purchase is necessary.

Entries must be received or postmarked by midnight, August 1, 2006. Void where prohibited. Employees of Costco and their families are not eligible. Winners will be notified by mail. One entry per household.



ONLINE! BONUS!

News about scheduled book signings at Costco and a book giveaway can be found in "Book Look," only in the July Online Edition at costco.com under "Costco magazine."

Send your feedback
on this month's book to:
discussionquestions@costco.com



Daniel Silva

JOHN EARLE

Mysteries, adventures for all ages

Errors and Omissions, by Paul Goldstein. Michael Seeley is an intellectual-property litigator—and a man on the brink of personal and career collapse. When United Pictures demands that he fly out to Hollywood to confirm that it owns the rights to its corporate cash-cow *Spykiller* films, he has to comply. What he discovers plunges him headlong into the messy tangle of the blacklisting era and from there into the even darker world of Nazi-occupied Poland.

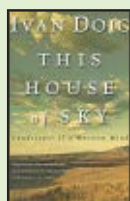
Lights Out Tonight, by Mary Jane Clark. For film and theater critic Caroline Enright, angry calls from producers and agents are one thing, but murder is quite another. While in the rolling Berkshire Mountains to do a piece on a prestigious summer acting festival, Enright discovers that someone in the quaint college town has a secret worth killing for. She must now use her journalistic skills to unmask a murderer before she and her stepdaughter become the next victims.

FICTION

The Messenger, by Daniel Silva. Gabriel Allon, art restorer and spy, is recovering from a showdown with a master terrorist when a figure from his past arrives in Jerusalem. Monsignor Luigi Donati, the private secretary to His Holiness Pope Paul VII, is a man as ruthless as he is intelligent. Now he has come to seek Allon's help. A Swiss guard has been found dead in St. Peter's Basilica, and although Donati has allowed the official inquiry to determine that it is suicide, his instinct tells him it is murder.

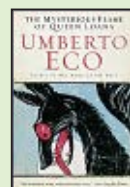
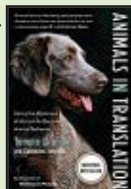
Break No Bones, by Kathy Reichs. Archaeological field school is almost over when Temperance Brennan's students find a decomposing body in a shallow grave. It is a recent burial of a middle-aged white male. Who is he? Why was he buried there? And what does the vertical hairline fracture of the sixth cervical vertebra signify? Brennan is working on answering those questions when her personal life is suddenly thrown into turmoil: Her estranged husband is shot by a bullet possibly meant for her, and another body is discovered.

Peter and the Shadow Thieves, by Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson. In this follow-up to *Peter and the Starcatchers*, young readers discover Peter leaving the relative safety of Mollusk Island for the cold, damp streets of London. On the journey, he encounters Lord Ombra, who has the ability to make shadows disappear. When Peter reaches London, he sets out to find Molly, and together they combat Ombra's powers to protect the magical, treasured starstuff and rescue Molly's mother. —Valerie Ryan



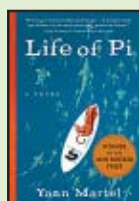
This House of Sky: Landscapes of a Western Mind by Ivan Doig
Doig's life among the shepherds and other denizens of small-town saloons and ranches of the West.
Trade Paper. Feb. 1980. Harvest Books

Animals in Translation: Using the Mysteries of Autism to Decode Animal Behavior by Temple Grandin and Catherine Johnson
A groundbreaking book that revolutionizes the understanding of how animals think and feel.
Trade Paper. Jan. 2006. Harvest Books



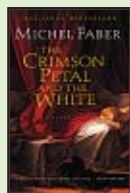
The Mysterious Flame of Queen Loana by Umberto Eco
A fascinating, abundant novel—wide-ranging, nostalgic, funny, full of heart.
Trade paper. June 2006. Harvest Books

The Club Dumas by Arturo Pérez-Reverte
Part mystery, part puzzle, part witty intertextual game—a wholly original intellectual thriller.
Trade Paper. May 2006. Harvest Books



Life of Pi by Yann Martel
Trade Paper. May 2003. Harvest Books

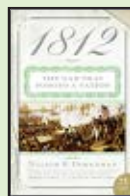
The Crimson Petal and the White by Michel Faber
Trade Paper. September 2003. Harvest Books



Blindness by José Saramago
Trade Paper. October 1999. Harvest Books



Lighthousekeeping by Jeanette Winterson
Trade Paper. April 2006. Harvest Books



1812: The War That Forged a Nation by Walter R. Borneman
This sweeping narrative emphasizes the War of 1812's importance to America's development as a nation and its subsequent westward expansion.
Trade Paper. October 2005. Harper Perennial



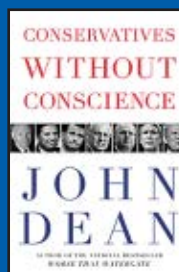
Down the Great Unknown by Edward Dolnick
Trade Paper. September 2002. Harper Perennial



The Children's Blizzard by David Laskin
An account of the blizzard of January 12, 1888, which killed some 500 settlers in Nebraska, the Dakotas and Minnesota—many of whom were children trying to get home from school.
Trade Paper. October 2005. Harper Perennial



April 1865: The Month That Saved America by Jay Winik
Trade Paper. April 2002. Harper Perennial



Conservatives Without Conscience by John Dean
Former White House legal counsel John Dean paints a vivid picture of what's happening at the top levels of the Republican Party.
Hardcover/Viking Books
On sale July 11, 2006

= available at most warehouses

Heard any good books?

Audies awarded

WITH SO MANY AWARDS for printed books, it's only fair that audio books get their say. Sponsored by the Audio Publishers Association, the Audies are the only completely juried-awards program that covers audio books and spoken-word entertainment.

This year marked the first-ever Hall of Fame Award, which went to the Harry Potter audio-book series.

Other winners include:

- **Audio Book of the Year:** *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy: The Tertiary Phase*, written by Douglas Adams and narrated by BBC Radio.
- **Fiction, Abridged:** *Q&A*, written by Vikas Swarup and narrated by Kerry Shale.
- **Fiction, Unabridged:** *A Slight Trick of the Mind*, written by Mitch Cullin and narrated by Simon Jones.
- **Nonfiction, Abridged:** *Luckiest Man*, written by Jonathan Eig and narrated by Edward Herrmann.
- **Nonfiction, Unabridged:** *The World Is Flat*, written by Thomas Friedman and narrated by Oliver Wyman.

For more information about audio books in general, see the article "Listen Up!" from the June 2006 *Connection*.

Book buzz

STARBUCKS HAS TEAMED UP with Listening Library, Random House's children's audio-book imprint, to co-release two titles from Rabbit Ears, an out-of-print collection of celebrity-narrated recordings. The titles to be released include *The Velveteen Rabbit* and *The Night Before Christmas*, both read by

Meryl Streep with music by George Winston and Mark O'Connor respectively.

Ken Lombard, president of Starbucks Entertainment, made the following statement: "We felt that this was a tremendous opportunity to continue our commitment to bringing quality family-entertainment options to our customers."

Listening Library is rolling out a relaunch of the entire Rabbit Ears line, beginning with four treasury collections, which will be available in August.

Source: *Publisher's Weekly Daily*

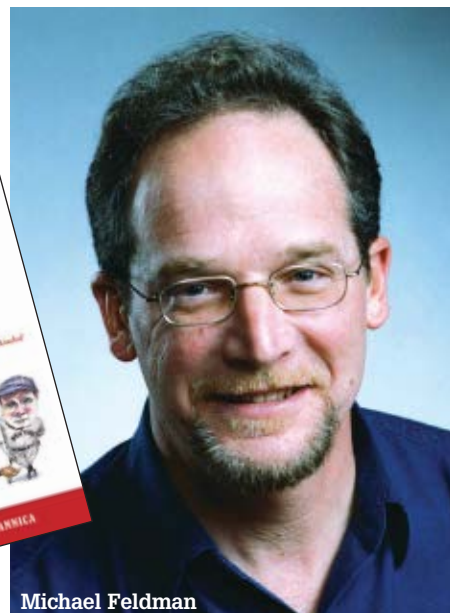
Libris Awards presented

AT LAST MONTH'S CANADIAN Book Expo, the Canadian Booksellers Association handed out several prizes at their annual Libris Awards. Stephen Lewis' *Race Against Time* won best nonfiction book of the year, while Lewis also took home the prize for author of the year. The best-novel award went to *Three Day Road* by Joseph Boyden.

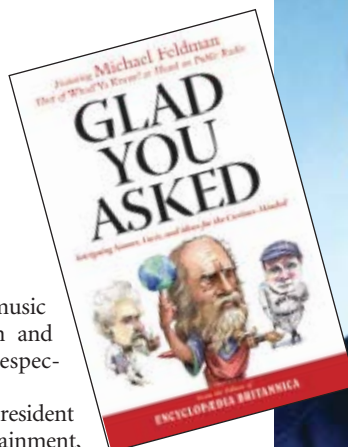
Two new awards were created this year to recognize the relationship between booksellers and the creators of children's books. Kenneth Opel was named children's author of the year, while Michael Martchenko was named children's illustrator of the year.

Orange Prize

ZADIE SMITH WON the Orange Prize for Fiction for her latest novel, *On Beauty*. Smith is familiar with the prize as her previous two novels, *White Teeth* and *The Autograph Man*,



Michael Feldman



have both been shortlisted in past years.

Set up in 1996, the Orange Prize for Fiction is intended to celebrate and promote fiction written by women. The winner receives a £30,000 prize and a bronze figurine.

In a statement to the press, Martha Kearney, chair of judges, said: "After an animated discussion, we decided to give this year's prize to *On Beauty* by Zadie Smith. This is a book which combines extraordinary characterization with skillful and seemingly effortless plotting. It ranges from exposing the intimacies of family life to broader themes of aesthetics, ethics and the vagaries of academe in a literary tour de force."

On Beauty was also shortlisted for the 2005 Man Booker Prize.

Source: *Publisher's Weekly Daily*

signings

Michael Feldman signs *Glad You Asked* on July 14, at the **Kirkland**, Washington, Costco, at 8629 120th Ave. NE.

Jane Porter signs *Flirting with Forty* on July 16, at 1 p.m., at the **Kirkland**, Washington, Costco, at 8629 120th Ave. NE.

Dave Freedman signs *Natural Selection* on July 15, at noon, at the **Westlake Village**, California, Costco, at 5700 Lindero Canyon Rd.

Sgt. Daniel Hendrex signs *A Soldier's Promise* on July 22, at noon, at the **San Diego**, California, Costco, at 4605 Morena Blvd.

(Click here for maps and directions to Costco locations.)

Book giveaway

Costco has 10 signed copies of *One Good Horse*, by Tom Groneberg, to give away. To enter, print your name, membership number, address and daytime phone number on a postcard or letter and send it to: *One Good Horse, The Costco Connection*, P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088, or fax it to (425) 313-6718.

No purchase is necessary. Entries

must be received or postmarked by midnight, August 1, 2006. Void where prohibited. Employees of Costco and their families are not eligible. Winners will be notified by mail. One entry per household.



Send your feedback on this month's Buyer's Pick to: discussionquestions@costco.com



Still life according to Spindel



Photographer captures baseball legends and more on film

By Richard Deitsch

Photographer David Spindel likes to joke that it took him 40 years to become an overnight sensation.

Though his name may not roll off the tongue with the Andy Warhols and Peter Maxes of the world, chances are you have seen Spindel's art. His still lifes of sports memorabilia and portraits of celebrities have resonated with art and sports fans of all ages. Perhaps his most famous portrait is one of baseball Hall of Famer Joe DiMaggio, which adorns the cover of the recently published *DiMaggio: Setting the Record Straight* (MBI Publishing, 2003). So close did Spindel get to the legendary Yankee that DiMaggio once referred to him as "my personal photographer" while introducing Spindel to another fair baseball player by the name of Ted Williams.

The Brooklyn-born (and Costco member) Spindel got his first taste of photography as a teenager when his mother gave him a Brownie Hawkeye camera. That fostered a love of photography that took him to the Rochester Institute of Technology, and upon graduation in 1964 he began his career as a working photographer in New York City. He ultimately branched out to working in commercial advertising and owned his own studio in New York City for nearly 30 years.

In addition to shooting the advertising campaigns for well-heeled companies such as Bulova, Spindel began taking portraits of celebrities in the 1970s, from George Burns to Liberace to John Lennon. In 1979 his twin passions of baseball and photography came together when an agency approached him to do a cover for *Yankee Magazine*. The assignment called for reproductions of Babe Ruth's and Lou Gehrig's uniforms, among others, to be shot in the Yankee locker room.

But Spindel found the place too modern for his vision, so he borrowed some old trunks from the team and constructed an antiquated-

looking locker room in his studio. The result was *Clubhouse*, a mélange of baseball memorabilia and Yankees jerseys. The image was made into a popular poster, and a lucrative new hobby for Spindel was born.

"I don't think there is another photographer in the world who does what I do," says Spindel, 65. "Most photographers are really photojournalists. They document things. A baseball game. The war. What I do is create photographs from nothing. Sometimes I'll spend six months just creating a photograph."

To that end, Spindel has a large room in his house in upstate New York where he stores the nearly 10,000 baseball-related items he has collected. In 1989 he spent several weeks putting together a piece that featured memorabilia from DiMaggio's career. When the baseball great finally agreed to Spindel's invitation to visit his studio, DiMaggio surprised Spindel by bringing along two prized possessions: a sterling silver humidifier that had been signed by his teammates to commemorate his famed 56-game hitting streak, and a baseball signed by President Ronald Reagan and Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev.

DiMaggio asked Spindel if he wanted to use them in his photograph. Surprised, Spindel improvised and set them among the other memorabilia. Then DiMaggio really stunned the photographer. "So where do I sit?" the slugger asked. Spindel nearly fainted. "I said to myself, 'OK, Spindel, I gotta make room for DiMaggio in the photograph.'" He


ended up taking a couple of posters out of the shot and set up an 8-by-10 camera to double-expose DiMaggio into the picture.

Two days later he brought the finished print to DiMaggio, who was doing an autograph show in Atlantic City. So overjoyed was DiMaggio when he saw the finished portrait—the same one that appears on the cover of *DiMaggio: Setting the Record Straight*—that he invited Spindel to stay for the weekend and hang out with pal Ted Williams and others.

Outside of his commercial projects, Spindel has donated his art to more than 100 charities and is the staff photographer for ARC (Association for Retarded Citizens) in Rockland County. He and his wife, Barbara, have been married for 39 years and have two children.

Spindel recently began working with a public relations specialist to market his artwork all over the world. The plan is for him to work with more contemporary athletes and sell

stationery and postcards of his work.

"My dad always said, before he died, 'Son, one day you are going to decorate the world and make it a more beautiful place to live in.' I constantly struggle to make that happen every day," says Spindel. "Right after he passed away, I wrote something down for him on a baseball. It read, 'Hi, Pop, I'm working on it.'" 

Richard Deitsch has written for numerous magazines and newspapers and is the author of three children's books. He resides in New York City.

member profile

Business: Spindel Visions Photography

President: David Spindel

Employees: David and his wife, Barbara

Products/services: Photographic artist for commercial advertising and private users

Member at: North Phoenix, Arizona

Comments about Costco: "In photography we use f-stops; at Costco it's one stop... it serves all my needs so I don't have to run around."

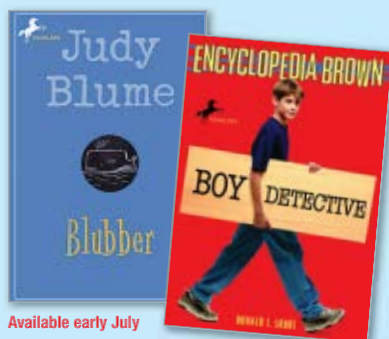
Contact at: 3308 West Links Drive
Anthem, Arizona 85086

Phone: (623) 322-9006

E-mail: dbspindel@cox.net

Web site: www.spindelvisions.com

Let your kids explore the world.



Available early July

Get your kids reading this summer with some favorites from Random House. Crack baffling cases with **Encyclopedia Brown, Boy Detective**, take a look at cruelty in school and how one girl learns how to stand up to bullies in Judy Blume's **Blubber** and many more.

YEARLING / PAPERBACK

Classics old and new are now available in threes at Costco Wholesale. **Where the Red Fern Grows** is a heart-warming story of an unforgettable friendship. When Henry Green eats too much chocolate, he actually comes down with **Chocolate Fever**. **Johnny Tremain** takes young readers back to 1776 Boston in an adventure straight out of history. And **Island of the Blue Dolphins** is an incredible story of one girl's survival. Pick up a 3-pack today!

YEARLING / PAPERBACK



Available early July



On sale July 25

Pick up Harry Potter in paperback! Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry is back in session! And with a new school year comes a hailstorm of magic, mystery and confrontation more intense than ever before. **Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince** begins where the fifth book in J.K. Rowling's bestselling series left off, with the chilling announcement of Lord Voldemort's return to power.

ARTHUR A. LEVINE BOOKS / SCHOLASTIC
www.scholastic.com/harrypotter



www.phidal.com

The Learning Series collection teaches children how to write letters and numbers, as well as how to draw shapes and basic objects. Includes a 22-page board book and a magnetic drawing pad. Available this July.



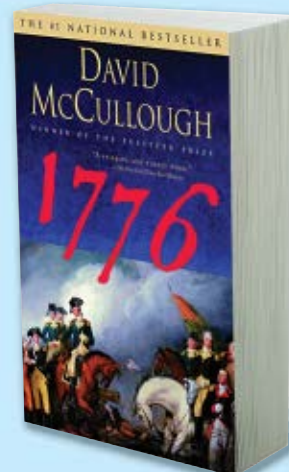
Available early July

The possibilities are endless with **Storybook Paper Doll Kits**. Disney princesses Belle, Cinderella, Ariel, Sleeping Beauty and Snow White come to life with more than 500 play pieces and five miniature storybooks.

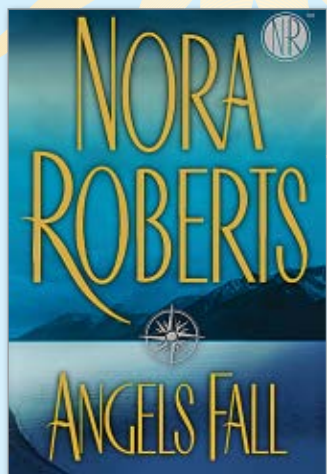
PUBLICATIONS INTERNATIONAL, INC.
ACTIVITY BOOK

From the Siege of Boston to the surprise victory at Trenton, **1776** draws on correspondence and diaries to paint a fascinating portrait of America's tumultuous infancy and miraculous achievement.

SIMON & SCHUSTER / PAPERBACK
Available now



Summer is the perfect time to get the family reading.



On sale July 11

A murder. A witness. One woman's desperate search for the truth. They all collide in Nora Roberts' latest, **Angels Fall**.

G.P. PUTNAM'S SONS, A MEMBER OF THE PENGUIN GROUP (U.S.A.), INC. / HARDCOVER

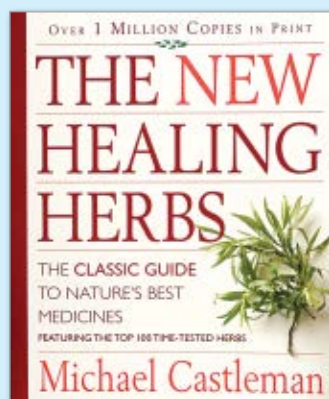
Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson team up again to write the follow-up to their popular *Peter and the Starcatchers*. This time around, Peter and his trusted friend Tinker Bell leave Mollusk Island for the dangerous streets of London. **Peter and the Shadow Thieves** provides nonstop action for Peter Pan fans of all ages.

DISNEY/HYPERION BOOKS FOR CHILDREN / HARDCOVER
Available mid-July



First Chalk Drawing Books are interactive board books with reusable blackboard pages that will keep young readers entertained for hours, completing scenes and drawing objects. It's never the same book twice—just erase and start again! Choose from **Doll, Train, ABC** and **123**.

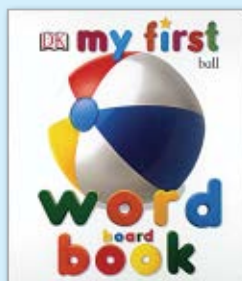
PARRAGON PUBLISHING / BOARD BOOK WITH CHALK
Available now



Available now

When it comes to your health, become your own best advocate with groundbreaking reference books that matter. Get the latest in herbal medicine in **The New Healing Herbs**, successfully self-treat more than 160 health conditions with **Alternative Cures** and more.

RODALE PRESS / PAPERBACK



Help build your child's vocabulary and early literary skills with **My First Big Board Book**. The series offers giant board books that feature beautiful, full-color photos of important items babies see every day.

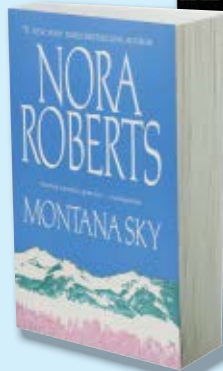
DK / BOARD BOOK
Available early July

Even death can't keep a truly evil man down, in Dean Koontz's **Whispers**.



Three sisters meet for the first time when they gather to hear the reading of their father's will, in **Montana Sky**.

BERKLEY, A MEMBER OF THE PENGUIN GROUP (USA), INC. PAPERBACK
Available now



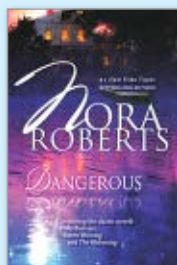
Life can be perilous, but **The Worst-Case Scenario Survival Handbooks** help when times are really tough. Hopefully, you'll never have the need to control a runaway hot-air balloon or get out of quicksand, but if you do, they have illustrated step-by-step instructions that will show you how to do it successfully.

CHRONICLE BOOKS / PAPERBACK
Available early July



Love and murder are a dangerous combination. Nora Roberts brings you three classic novels, **Risky Business, Storm Warning** and **The Welcoming**, all in one book.

SILHOUETTE BOOKS / PAPERBACK
Available now



This year, entering the Costco International Photo Contest is easier than ever. You will be able to "Give Us Your Best Shot" online or in print form. For online details go to www.costcophotocontest.com Whether it's a photo you took hours to set up or one you grabbed in a second, it will take only a few minutes for you to send in your entry. So get snapping!

Contest starts July 1, 2006.

International Grand Prize

\$2,500 Costco Cash card (or equivalent)

National Prizes

First Prize: \$1,500 Costco Cash card

Second Prize: \$1,000 Costco Cash card

Third Prize: \$500 Costco Cash card

All winners will also receive: A Fuji QuickSnap Flash one-time-use camera and a scrapbook or photo album. (Honorable mentions to be awarded at judges' discretion.)

contest software powered by: **omnisg**

Costco Photo Contest 2006 Official Rules

1. To enter, submit an unframed, unmounted black-and-white or color picture (4" x 6" or 5" x 7") with the entry form securely affixed to the back. Online entries should be in JPEG format. Save a high-quality print (which will be required) in the event you are a winner.
2. The theme of the contest is "Give Us Your Best Shot." Winning entries will be those that best reflect the theme. Decisions of the judges are final.
3. Photos will not be judged unless the entrant's name, address, membership number and telephone number have been written legibly on the entry form and attached to the back of the photo.
4. No purchase necessary. Must be 18 years or older to enter.
5. Entrant must be a current membership cardholder of Costco. No prizes will be awarded until entrant's membership status has been verified as current by Costco.
6. One entry per membership cardholder; additional entries will be disqualified. Previously published photographs are acceptable.
7. Odds of winning will depend on the total number of entries submitted.
8. Photos must be suitable for family viewing.
9. **Contestants must know the names and addresses of all identifiable people in their photographs.**
10. All entries become the property of Costco. Receipt of entries cannot be acknowledged and entries cannot be returned. Costco assumes no responsibility for submitted photographs.
11. Employees of Costco Wholesale Corporation and members of their immediate families (spouse/domestic partner and any children over 18 years old living with the employee and having a valid Costco card) are not eligible to enter. Employees of sponsoring companies or members of their immediate families are not eligible to enter.
12. A separate contest will be held for Costco employees and their immediate families.
13. Entries must be postmarked by September 30, 2006. Award winners will be notified by December 2006. Winners will be notified by mail.
14. Mail entries to: Costco Photo Contest, P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088.
15. Contest is void where prohibited or restricted by law, where a license is required or where subject to tax (other than tax on prizes awarded). All federal, provincial, state and local taxes are the sole responsibility of the winners.
16. All fees and personal expenses incidental to redemption of prizes (as deemed necessary) will be the sole responsibility of the winners.
17. Prizes must be claimed within 30 days of notification. If not claimed by this date, the prizes will be forfeited. All claims thereto following this date will be null and void.
18. No substitution or transfer of prizes except at the sole discretion of the sponsor. All restrictions apply.
19. Each winner must agree in writing that his or her name, likeness, city, winning photo and negative may be used by Costco for promotional and publication purposes without additional compensation. Prior to receiving prizes, each winner will be required to sign a release provided by Costco to this effect and obtain a release or permission from anyone with proprietary rights in the winning photograph (such as artwork, trademarks or a person's likeness). Refusal or inability to provide such releases or permissions will result in entrant's disqualification in this photo contest, and any prizes will be forfeited.
20. Costco reserves the right to cancel or suspend the contest should any cause beyond the control of Costco affect the administration, security, fairness, integrity or proper operation of the contest, or for any other reason it deems appropriate, at its sole and absolute discretion.

Give us your best shot.

Costco International Photo Contest 2006

Submit online at www.costcophotocontest.com

or cut out and tape
this entry form
to the back of a
4" x 6" or 5" x 7"
photo and mail to:

Costco Members Photo Contest

Costco Wholesale
P.O. Box 34088
Seattle, WA
98124-1088

Member Name

Address

City

State

Zip Code

Home Phone

Membership No.

Location of Photo

Please sign that you have read and understand the contest rules.

All entries must be postmarked or submitted online by September 30, 2006.

 **FUJIFILM**

Canon

CASIO

COSTCO
1 HOUR PHOTO

DELL

hp

Kodak

Lexar

Nikon

OLD TOWN
DESIGNER SERIES

OLYMPUS

Panasonic

SanDisk

COSTCO
WHOLESALE

Savoring *la belle* France



By Pat Volchok

A VISIT to beautiful Provence and Burgundy is a heady experience. These side-by-side French regions hold ancient walled cities; early-morning markets; sweeping, lavender-scented fields; bouillabaisse, tapenades and rich cheeses; Roman ruins; the glorious grapes of Côte du Rhône and Côte d'Or; and the smell of chocolate in the air.

This is the beautiful France many travelers dream of. Thanks to Costco Travel and Uniworld Grand River Cruises, such a French adventure is available for Costco members joining me from October 1 through 11.

"River cruising is a hot travel trend," reports Costco Travel cruise buyer Lauren Anderson. "It's as if you're traveling the secret waterways of a country's interior. What a treat."

Our journey begins with an exclusive complimentary three-day sampling of the French Riviera in Nice, famous for its belle époque architecture and beachfront promenades.

The *pièce de résistance* follows—a leisurely paced, seven-day river cruise aboard Uniworld's newest ship, *River Royale*. She'll take us on a magical voyage featuring architecture, history and cuisine, through the Rhône Valley into the heart of Provence and Burgundy via the numerous locks of the historic Rhône and Saône rivers.

We'll visit Arles, rich in Gallo-Roman ruins; the walled city of Avignon, with its 14th-century Palais des Papes (the equivalent of today's Vatican); the narrow, cobbled streets of Viviers; Tournon, at the foot of impressive



River-cruise guests enjoy wine and other regional riches, along with Old World sights, such as the St.-Bénézet bridge over the Rhône River in Avignon, France.

PHOTO: UNIWORLD

granite hills; Lyon, the culinary capital of France; the architecturally rich town of Mâcon; and Chalon, an important wine center in the very heart of Burgundy.

French pleasures include a Côte du Rhône wine tasting; dinner at l'Abbaye des Collonges, one of Paul Bocuse's famed restaurants; a decadent sampling at the world-famous Valrhona chocolate factory; escorted


walking tours through historic villages forever captured in the paintings of van Gogh and Cézanne; a private organ concert in a Romanesque cathedral; and numerous other surprises.

Voted one of the top 10 small-ship cruise lines by the readers of *Travel + Leisure* in 2005, Uniworld embodies the best of river cruising: quality craftsmanship, technological innovations (*River Royale* has Wi-Fi and Internet access), English-speaking crews, country-club-casual policies and scenic viewing.

For those accustomed to ocean cruising, river cruising is less frenzied and more intimate. Ships rarely carry more than 200 guests (*River Royale* numbers 132), offer no lost days at sea, travel on much calmer waters, typically include motor and/or walking tours and venture where no larger cruise ship dares—docking in the heart of picturesque, off-the-beaten-track villages.

River Royale features many extras, including a flat-screen television in each cabin, European-style bedding and international and Provençal cuisine.

Don't delay. Members will gobble this offer up.

P.S. A three-night post-cruise package in Paris is also possible. Be still, my heart ... 

Pat Volchok (pvolchok@costco.com) is The Costco Connection's consumer columnist and Costco Travel's cruise host.

KIRKLAND
Signature



MEMBER EXCLUSIVE!

Join Pat Volchok as she hosts 100 Costco members on a tour of Nice, France and then on a cruise through the heart of Burgundy and Provence aboard the new *River Royale*.

Complimentary inclusions, valued at more than \$1,000 per person:

- Economy-class airfare from NYC (zone 1) to Nice. Ask about special add-on airfare from other gateways
- Three-nights in Nice, daily breakfast and one full-day tour. A Costco member exclusive
- Welcome reception in Nice
- Costco members-only wine and cheese event in Viviers
- One-hour Internet access onboard ship

This Grand River Cruise includes seven nights aboard ship, all ground transportation, all meals, and walking and motor coach tours.

ITINERARY: ARLES, PROVENCE, AVIGNON, VIVIERES, TOURNON, LYON, MÂCON, CHALON AND LYON.

10-night vacation with airfare
from **\$2,975** per person*
Valid on 10/1/06 departure.

Optional three-night post-cruise Paris package, including breakfast and city tour, reflects 50% savings off everyday Uniworld price.

from **\$498** per person*



UNIWORLD
The Value of Experience

*Price shown is per person based on double occupancy, is valid for stateroom category 2 only, is true and accurate at time of printing and does not include government taxes/fees and gratuities. Restrictions may apply. Economy-class airfare from NYC is included in price. Airfare from other gateways is available at an additional charge. All offers and inclusions are subject to availability, may change or be terminated without notice and are valid for new bookings only. Unless otherwise noted, offers are not combinable with select rate codes, coupons or other offers. Travel purchases are not included in Executive Membership 2% Reward program. Offer is valid on date shown. Cancellation and change fees may apply. Costco Travel disclaims liability for any inaccuracies or typographical errors. Ship's registry: The Netherlands.

Costco Travel is a registered seller of travel and travel agency in the following states: Washington (WST 602042600); Ohio (8789302); Florida (Fla. Seller of Travel Reg. No. ST32555); and California (CST 2054248-50). Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the state of California. 06TR1001B 7/06

VISIT **COSTCO.COM** OR CALL COSTCO TRAVEL
TOLL FREE AT 1-877-849-2730.

The Costco Connection

To join me on this 10-day feast for the senses, call Costco Travel toll-free at 1-877-849-2730 (ask about our Europe Holiday Markets cruise also!).

Insurance that saves

It's easy to compare Costco's auto and home insurance program rates, and save

By Will Fifield

SEEING, THEY SAY, is believing. Many members are seeing substantial savings in their pocketbooks since switching to Costco's Auto and Home Insurance program.

According to John Conlon, Costco insurance program director, more than 180,000 members have checked the Costco insurance program's rates against those of their previous carriers and switched their coverage—at an average reported savings of \$400 in the first year for auto insurance alone. And because Costco's insurance partner, Ameriprise Auto & Home Insurance (formerly the American Express Property Casualty companies), also offers home insurance and umbrella insurance policies at great rates, it's not hard to dramatically increase your savings (see "A change for the better," below).

John says most people tend to forget about their insurance until some aspect of it, such as poor service or a rate hike, causes them to think about it. "I think many members hesitate to shop around for insurance because it is confusing," he says. "Industry terms are unfamiliar, the language in most

policies is hard to understand and the only time you benefit from your insurance is when something goes wrong."

Also, many people think they have to wait until their current policy expires before they can make a change. However, you can switch at any time, John says. If you switch prior to the expiration of your current policy, most companies will refund your remaining premium, but it's best to check with your current carrier about any fees they may assess.

Comparing rates is a simple matter. Call the Costco program toll-free at 1-888-404-5365 or visit costco.com, click on "Services," then on "Auto & Home Insurance," to get a free quote.


Before you check on the Costco program, have the following information available:

- Your current auto and home insurance policy
- Your vehicle's identification number

(found on the title and registration)

- Information about your home such as its age and type, square footage, number of stories and market value
 - Your Costco membership number
- The value of insuring with Ameriprise Auto & Home Insurance through Costco is that members in most states get specially negotiated rates and receive priority service through a phone line dedicated exclusively to Costco's program.

Executive Members receive one year of free roadside assistance for vehicles covered by this program and lifetime renewability on auto policies, which offers renewals for members regardless of most claims history (see sidebar).

Quality of service is as important as price for insurance. A.M. Best, the leading independent rater of insurers in the country, has given the Ameriprise Auto & Home Insurance group of underwriters an "A," or "excellent," rating. This rating testifies to the program's financial strength, stability and soundness of operating performance. 

A change for the better

LAST DECEMBER, my husband, Gary, and I were shocked to receive a letter from our insurance company stating that they were dropping our house insurance because we filed a claim. We had been with the company for more than 30 years. In that time we had never submitted a claim.

However, after my car was broken into on my driveway, in broad daylight, I submitted a claim for \$1,000 against my home policy. We insured our house, cars, jewelry and art with this company. Thinking there must have been a mistake, I called and spoke with a manager. "We're

sorry," he said, and offered me no options.

I was upset, so I asked Gary to contact Ameriprise Auto & Home Insurance, Costco's insurance partner. I have to tell you, they have been wonderful. We ended up canceling all of our policies with our previous company and switched to Costco's program.

When our previous company called to ask why we switched, I was thrilled to be able to say, "Because you don't value 30 years of patronage, and guess what: We're now saving \$800 per year."

—Pat Volchok

Costco Connection consumer reporter



Auto & Home Insurance is underwritten by Ameriprise Insurance Company, AMEX Assurance Company or IDS Property Casualty Insurance Company, De Pere, WI. Each company is a wholly owned subsidiary of Ameriprise Financial Inc., independent of American Express. Discounts, savings and benefits vary by state and apply to certain coverages. The Costco Home Insurance Program is not currently available in Florida. Certain restrictions and limitations apply. Services may vary by region or state.

Average savings data represent information provided by Costco members who became new auto insurance policyholders and reported savings with Ameriprise Auto & Home Insurance between 10/01/05 and 03/31/06. Individual savings and experience may vary based upon a variety of factors, including, but not limited to, driving experience and type of automobile insured.

Lifetime renewability is not available to insureds who have major violations, suspension or revocation of driver's license, fail to pay premium, move to a state where our products are not available or purchase a vehicle we do not insure.

The ultimate practical gift: Costco Cash card

JULY ISN'T ASSOCIATED with any big gift-giving events—such as Mother's Day or graduation—but rest assured a wedding, birthday or reason to say “thank you” is likely to occur. One gift that fits nearly everyone's needs is a Costco Cash card.

More than just a gift card, the Costco Cash card is an ideal item for members wanting to help their college-age children keep gas in the car or supply a dorm room with snacks or personal touches. Business owners can use them as a way for employees to buy supplies or as part of an incentive program.

The cards are also a practical alternative for members who don't use debit or credit cards and those who don't want to be stuck carrying large amounts of cash.

The cards are easy to buy, use and reload. Here's what members should know about

Costco Cash cards.

■ Cards purchased in the warehouse can be loaded for any amount from \$25 up to \$1,000. Cards purchased online can be loaded with \$25, \$50 or any \$100 increment up to \$1,000.

■ Costco Cash cards can be used anywhere within a Costco warehouse—including the Food Court and gas stations.

■ Costco Cash cards do not expire, and there are no inactivity fees to chip away at the balance.

■ Balances can be checked at one of the kiosks next to the Costco Cash card display, by calling toll-free 1-800-255-8850, by checking your receipt after paying with your card or by seeing the amount flash on the screen when you use your card to pay for gas.

—Stephanie E. Ponder

Members can pick up cards and check their balance at any Costco Cash card kiosk.



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Prime time

Top grades, low price make
Costco's meats a sizzlin' value

Buying Smart

Consumer reporter
Pat Volchok gives a
behind-the-scenes look
at Costco products
and services.
Send your questions to:
**[buyingsmart@
costco.com](mailto:buyingsmart@costco.com)**

GREAT GRILLING at the Volchok home always starts with Costco's classic steaks. No others will do.

To discover the secrets behind these juicy hunks of beef, I tracked down the experts at Costco's home office. I learned a lot of interesting facts about how meat is processed and prepared, what the best cuts are and the best ways to match cuts and cooking methods. But what stood out in my research was how beef is graded—and what that means to Costco members in the warehouses and online at costco.com.

Costco's beef buyer, Scott O'Brien, started off by telling me that all beef sold in the United States must pass inspection by the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The actual grading of beef is not a requirement. Sadly, not all retailers feel com-

pelled to pay for this extra step, so ungraded cuts of beef are still sold. But never at Costco.

The difference is in the grade

Beef is graded into eight levels, with Prime and Choice being the top two grades. Costco carries only USDA Prime or Choice cuts of beef, Scott says.

So what sets grades apart? It's the degree of "marbling," Scott explains. Marbling is the small pieces of fat within the meat (as opposed to what is found on the edges). In general, the higher the amount of marbling, the more tender, juicy and flavorful the meat.

USDA Prime has the highest level of marbling and represents only about 2 percent of all graded beef. Unsurprisingly, Prime is the most expensive grade. (USDA Prime steaks are available on costco.com, and Prime cuts are periodically available at Costco warehouses.)

Next on the grade list, and most popular among consumers, is USDA Choice, with sufficient marbling for taste and tenderness but a lower price. USDA Choice cuts from grain-fed beef are available in Costco warehouses.

Number three in terms of marbling and taste is USDA Select.

Grading is just the first step in Costco's meat program. According to Doug Holbrook, an assistant

Pat Volchok and Costco's
Charlie Winters prepare
to grill some tantalizing
Costco steaks.



PHOTOS: FRANCE FREEMAN

general-merchandising manager in Costco's Fresh Foods group, all of Costco's fresh-cut meats must pass two Costco inspections. The first is conducted at a Costco regional quality-control distribution center and the other at each warehouse's meat department.

The best cuts at Costco

Once the meat has been approved, it is the job of Costco butchers in each warehouse to hand-trim and package the beef to Costco's high standards. "When our butchers are done, all that is left is a beautiful cut with very little plate waste," Doug reports.

Another key stop on my research was with Charlie Winters, Costco vice president and director of meat and deli operations, who offered up some steak advice.

"Costco's 1- to 1¼-inch-thick, 14-ounce USDA Choice New York strip [also known as loin, strip loin or Kansas City] is our number-one warehouse seller," says Charlie, who played the lead role in developing Costco's meat program. "It is well marbled and bursting with flavor. Many steak eaters covet the New York for its leanness. It speaks of tradition."

The 14-ounce, boneless USDA Choice rib eye (also called Delmonico or Spencer), a fillet cut of tender prime rib, is Charlie's favorite cut. Charlie describes this steak, highly coveted for its buttery, big beef flavor, as "a slice of prime rib in steak form." (Leftovers make unbelievable fajitas.)

Costco's 8-ounce, boneless USDA Choice tenderloin (filet mignon), cut from the heart of the tenderloin, is the most consistently tender, lean and flavorful steak in the warehouse. (Also ideal for the crème de la crème of beef fondue.)

Ready for Prime

During my research, one point was frequently repeated: Prime cuts are the best of the best. USDA Certified Prime steaks, rarely found outside of high-

end restaurants, are available on costco.com at Costco prices and with Costco's 100-percent-satisfaction guarantee.

"Members are raving about these USDA Prime steaks," enthuses costco.com meat buyer Harjit Grewall. "We have taken so many extra steps. For example, our naturally aged Prime steaks are processed the day they are ordered, unlike some retailers who freeze their steaks indefinitely."

Costco.com offers the top-selling USDA Prime tenderloins (six pieces, 8 ounces each, Item #950444); boneless Prime rib eyes (four pieces, 14 ounces each, Item #950436); Prime New Yorks (four pieces, 14 ounces each, Item #950448); and a Prime tenderloin-rib eye combo (Item #101228).

Taking ground to the next level

While on the topic of meat and Costco, it's impossible to ignore ground beef. The focus here is on safety and quality, says Bob Huskey, Costco's ground-beef buyer.

"Costco has some of the most stringent ground-beef safety protocols in the industry," Bob notes. "We grind our own fresh ground beef in each warehouse daily to ensure quality and wholesomeness."

Fresh ground beef is offered extra lean (12 percent fat or less) in bulk or as patties, and as USDA Choice extra-lean ground round in many locations.

In the freezer section, look for Kirkland Signature™ 91-percent-lean ground-beef chubs (makes the king of ground-beef tacos), hefty one-quarter-pound ground-beef patties (24- and 40-count), one-third-pound ground sirloin and loin of beef patties (85 percent lean) and precooked beef meatballs.

One last note: Costco offers three warehouse meat lineups for members: standardized cuts at the counter plus individual or by-the-case uncut slabs. Uncuts are preferred by value-conscious members who don't mind doing their own cutting and trimming, as well as by hotels and restaurants.

All in all, it's clear that Costco's meat program is truly a "signature" department, offering a tremendous commitment to quality control, a nice selection to meet all cooking needs and great low prices.

Of this I am sure: Costco has raised the "steaks" again—and all in the name of flavor, quality, value and member happiness. [E]



Pat's outdoor kitchen

THE HUBBY and I tested costco.com's Prime tenderloin against an upscale national mail-order meat supplier.

Both arrived as promised. Costco.com's elegant black packaging includes a reusable grilling-temperature sensor and clearly labels the steaks as USDA Prime. The competition's package subtly states "premium."

Costco's gorgeous cherry red Primes were individually wrapped, 1¾ inches thick, hand-trimmed and rich with veins of marbling. The competition's premiums were only 1 inch thick, with some outer fat, little marbling and an uninviting brown color.

We grilled the steaks at the same time and then chowed down. The flavor of Costco's steaks was fantabulous and oh-so-tender. The competition's bland and gristly steaks were saved for sandwiches.

Last, I did a price check. Not only was the price lower at costco.com, I found that when you consider the quality of the cut and shipping costs, costco.com's price was an even more dramatic savings. To me, that spells value.—PV

ONLINE! BONUS!

Steven Raichlen, of *Barbecue University* on PBS, shares his "Ten Commandments of Perfect Grilling," along with tips on how to grill the perfect hamburger, New York or tenderloin, in July's *Online Edition* at costco.com under "Costco magazine."

Raichlen's grilling cookbooks, *The Barbecue! Bible* and *How to Grill*, are both available in warehouses and on costco.com. And the Steven Raichlen Signature Barbecue Rub and Sauce Set is available at costco.com at a special savings during July.



Sizzling value

* Includes actual meat price and two-day shipping. Prices based on a survey taken in May 2006.

	Grade	Cut	Weight	Total cost*	Total price/pound*
Costco.com	Prime	Filet	48 oz.	\$107.99	\$30.00
	Prime	Strip	56 oz.	\$107.99	\$25.71
Nat'l online meat supplier	Prime	Filet	48 oz.	\$207.93	\$59.33
	Prime	Strip	56 oz.	\$194.93	\$47.14

The Ten Commandments of Perfect Grilling

1. BE ORGANIZED. Have everything you need for grilling—the food, marinade, basting sauce, seasonings, and equipment—on hand and at grillside before you start grilling.

2. GAUGE YOUR FUEL. There's nothing worse than running out of charcoal or gas in the middle of grilling. When using charcoal, light enough to form a bed of glowing coals 3 inches larger on all sides than the surface area of the food you're planning to cook. (A 22½-inch grill needs one chimney's worth of coals.) When cooking on a gas grill, make sure the tank is at least one-third full.

3. PREHEAT THE GRILL TO THE RIGHT TEMPERATURE. Remember: Grilling is a high-heat cooking method. In order to achieve the seared crust, charcoal flavor, and handsome grill marks associated with masterpiece grillmanship, you must cook over a high heat. How high? At least 500°F. Although I detail this elsewhere, it is worth repeating: When using charcoal, let it burn until it is covered with a thin coat of gray ash. Hold your hand about 6 inches above the grate. After 3 seconds, the force of the heat should force you to snatch your hand away. When using a gas grill, preheat to high (at least 500°F); this takes 10 to 15 minutes. When indirect grilling, preheat the grill to 350°F.

4. KEEP IT CLEAN. There's nothing less appetizing than grilling on dirty old

burnt bits of food stuck to the grate. Besides, the food will stick to a dirty grate. Clean the grate twice: once after you've preheated the grill and again when you've finished cooking. The first cleaning will remove any bits of food you may have missed after your last grilling session. Use the edge of a metal spatula to scrape off large bits of food, a stiff wire brush to finish scrubbing the grate.

5. KEEP IT LUBRICATED. Oil the grate just before placing the food on top, if necessary (some foods don't require that the grates be oiled). Spray it with oil (away from the flames—see page 13), use a folded paper towel soaked in oil, or rub it with a piece of fatty bacon, beef fat, or chicken skin.

6. TURN, DON'T STAB. The proper way to turn meat on a grill is with tongs or a spatula. Never stab the meat with a carving fork—unless you want to drain the flavor-rich juices onto the coals.

7. KNOW WHEN TO BASTE. Oil-and-vinegar-, citrus-, and yogurt-based bastes and marinades can be brushed on the meat throughout the cooking time. (If you baste with a marinade that you used for raw meat or seafood, do not apply it during the last 3 minutes of cooking.) When using a sugar-based barbecue sauce, apply it toward the end of the cooking time. The

sugar in these sauces burns easily and should not be exposed to prolonged heat.

8. KEEP IT COVERED. When cooking larger cuts of meat and poultry, such as a whole chicken, leg of lamb, or prime rib, use the indirect method of grilling or barbecuing (see pages 14 and 16). Keep the grill tightly covered and resist the temptation to peek. Every time you lift the lid, you add 5 to 10 minutes to the cooking time.

9. GIVE IT A REST. Beef, steak, chicken—almost anything you grill—will taste better if you let it stand on the cutting board for a few minutes before serving. This allows the meat juices, which have been driven to the center of a roast or steak by the searing heat, to return to the surface. The result is a juicier, tastier piece of meat.

10. NEVER DESERT YOUR POST. Grilling is an easy cooking method, but it demands constant attention. Once you put something on the grill (especially when using the direct method), stay with it until it's cooked. This is not the time to answer the phone, make the salad dressing, or mix up a batch of your famous *mojitos*.

Above all, have fun. Remember that grilling isn't brain surgery. And that's the gospel!



HOW TO GRILL STRIP STEAKS

METHOD:
Direct grilling

COOKING TIME:
8 to 12 minutes

Steak. One simple word that spells a heap of pleasure. Steak is the measure of a grill jockey's mettle, and the ability to grill one to the perfect degree of doneness is the mark of a master. Fortunately, by following three simple procedures, it's easy to produce a perfect steak every time.

First is the choice of steak. The high, dry heat of grilling requires a tender cut of beef. Second is the heat of the grill. Steak needs a high heat to sear the outside. Finally, you need to give the steak a rest before serving. The high heat of the grill forces the juices deep into the meat. When you let the steak rest for a few minutes, the juices flow back throughout the meat.

*Strip Steak
with Tarragon Butter
and grilled yellow
and red beets*



SETTING UP THE GRILL

TIPS

■ Steak can be grilled over charcoal or gas, but nothing beats the smoke flavor imparted by grilling over wood. Instructions for grilling over wood are found on page 12. Alternatively, toss a handful of wood chips on the coals. I don't bother to soak wood chips for steak, as I want a light wood flavor not a heavy taste of smoke.

■ A great deal of ink has been spilled about whether or not to let the steaks come to room temperature before grilling. This may shorten the cooking time briefly, but I don't bother. Neither do most steak houses.

■ Arrange the steaks on the grate so that all face the same way. This helps them cook evenly and gives you uniform grill marks.



1 To set up a charcoal grill for direct grilling, first light the charcoal in a chimney starter (see page 9).



2 Using a garden hoe or other long-handled implement, rake the burning coals into an even layer.



3 To see if the grill is preheated to high, use the test on page 10.

ON THE GRILL



1 To create a handsome crosshatch of grill marks, arrange the steak on a 45 degree angle to the bars of the grate.



2 Rotate the steak 90 degrees after 2 to 3 minutes.



3 Turn the steak over with tongs and cook on the other side the same way. The steak will take a total of 8 to 12 minutes to cook to medium-rare.

THE RECIPE

STRIP STEAKS WITH TARRAGON BUTTER

*4 boneless strip steaks
(8 to 10 ounces each)
Coarse salt and black pepper*

*4 tablespoons Tarragon Butter
(page 450)*

1. Set up the grill for direct grilling (see page 10 for charcoal or page 16 for gas) and preheat to high. If using a gas grill, place the wood chips, if desired, in the smoker box or in a smoker pouch (see page 17) and preheat until you see smoke. Generously season the steaks on both sides with salt and pepper.

2. When ready to cook, if using a charcoal grill, toss the wood chips on the coals, if desired.

3. Brush and oil the grill grate. Arrange the steaks on the hot grate at a 45 degree angle to the bars of the grate. Grill for 4 to 6 minutes, pressing on the steaks with a spat-

ula for a few seconds. Rotate the steaks 90 degrees after 2 to 3 minutes to create an attractive crosshatch of grill marks. Turn the steaks over with tongs and grill the second side the same way for medium-rare. Test for doneness, using the poke method (see page 55). Or insert an instant-read meat thermometer in the thickest portion of the meat. The internal temperature will be about 145°F for medium-rare.

4. Transfer the steaks to plates or a platter. Top each steak with a round of the Tarragon Butter, rubbing it over the meat with a fork. Let the steaks rest for 2 to 3 minutes before serving.

SERVES 4

YOU'LL NEED:
2 cups wood
chips (optional;
preferably
mesquite or oak),
unsoaked

ALSO GOOD FOR:

Any beefsteak can be grilled this way and topped with any type of flavored butter you fancy (see recipes on pages 450 and 451). You can also use this basic method for grilling pork and veal chops, chicken breasts, and fish steaks and fillets.

METHOD:
Direct grilling

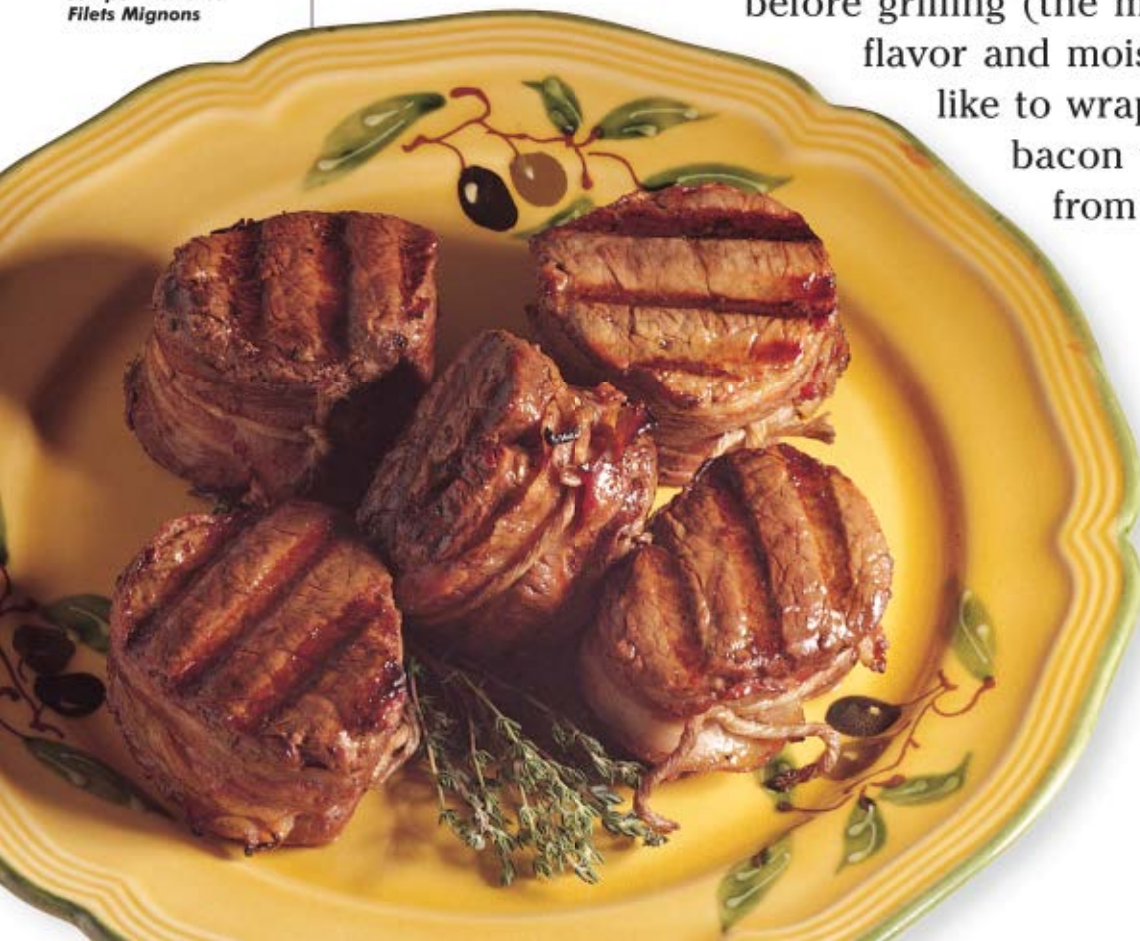
COOKING TIME:
12 to 15 minutes

**ADVANCE
PREPARATION:**
2 to 4 hours for
marinating the
meat

*Juniper-Flavored
Filets Mignons*

HOW TO GRILL FILET MIGNON

For many people, filet mignon is the ultimate steak. It's certainly the most expensive. Curiously, the very qualities that make filet mignon so expensive and desirable—it is lean, tender, and mildly flavored—pose a challenge for the cook. Fat is what gives meat its flavor, and a fillet's relative leanness makes its taste somewhat bland. The lack of marbling also gives it a tendency to dry out. To combat these tendencies, I like to marinate filet mignon before grilling (the marinade adds flavor and moistness). I also like to wrap the fillets in bacon to keep them from drying out.



SETTING UP THE GRILL



1 To set up a charcoal grill for direct grilling, first light the charcoal in a chimney starter (see page 9).



2 Using a garden hoe or other long-handled implement, rake the burning coals into an even layer.



3 To see if the grill is preheated to high, use the test on page 10.

PREPARING THE MEAT



1 First cut the beef tenderloin crosswise into 2-inch filet mignon steaks. Save the tenderloin "tail" (at bottom) for kebabs or satés.



2 Wrap the filets mignons in bacon.

TIP

■ You can use any marinade in this book in place of the wine marinade here. The teriyaki marinade from *Tangerine Teriyaki Tofu*, Step 2, on page 417 goes especially well with filet mignon. You can even skip the marinade, but do wrap the fillets in bacon to keep them moist.

TIP

■ Because filet mignon is such a thick steak, grill the sides as well as the top and bottom.



3 Tie the bacon in place with butcher's string. Transfer the fillets to a baking dish.



4 Adding red wine and diced vegetables and herbs gives the filets mignons a wild game flavor.



5 Juniper berries give the beef a distinctive woodsy aroma and flavor. For a stronger flavor, crush the berries before adding them.



ON THE GRILL: Grill the filets mignons on their sides as well as the top and bottom, for a total of 12 to 15 minutes.

THE RECIPE

JUNIPER-FLAVORED FILETS MIGNONS

*1 piece beef tenderloin, trimmed
(about 2½ pounds), or
6 filet mignon steaks
(about 6 ounces each)
6 strips bacon or pancetta
(Italian bacon)
2 cups dry red wine
2 shallots, thinly sliced
1 rib celery, finely chopped
1 carrot, finely chopped*

*2 cloves garlic, crushed with
the side of a cleaver
2 bay leaves
2 sprigs fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 teaspoons juniper berries or
1 tablespoon gin
Coarse salt and black pepper
1 piece (1 inch) butter (2 tablespoons)
Shallot Marmalade (optional; page 461)*

1. If using tenderloin, cut into filet mignon steaks, as shown in Preparing the Meat, Step 1 on page 67. Wrap each filet mignon with a strip of bacon, as shown in Steps 2 and 3, securing it with butcher's string.

2. Place the wine in a nonreactive bowl or measuring cup and stir in the shallots, celery, carrot, garlic, bay leaves, and thyme. Generously rub the steaks on both sides with some of the oil and place in a baking dish. Pour the wine mixture over the meat and add the juniper berries on top. Pour any remaining oil over the meat and let marinate in the refrigerator, covered, for 2 to 4 hours, turning the fillets 2 or 3 times.

3. Set up the grill for direct grilling (see

page 10 for charcoal or page 16 for gas) and preheat to high. When ready to cook, brush and oil the grill grate.

4. Remove the meat from the marinade and drain well. Season the steaks on both sides with salt and pepper and arrange them on the hot grate. Grill until cooked to taste, 4 to 6 minutes each for the top and bottom for medium-rare (about 145°F on an instant-read meat thermometer inserted in the center of the meat). Turn the steaks on their sides with tongs for 2 to 3 minutes to crisp the bacon. Transfer the steaks to a platter, rub the tops with the butter, and let rest for 3 to 5 minutes before serving. Remove and discard the strings. Serve the beef with the Shallot Marmalade, if desired.

SERVES 6

YOU'LL NEED:
Butcher's string

ALSO GOOD FOR:

The marinade in this recipe will give any type of grilled meat the flavor of its analog in wild game. Thus, grilled pork acquires the flavor of wild boar; grilled lamb, mountain goat; grilled chicken, partridge; and so on.

METHOD:
Direct grilling

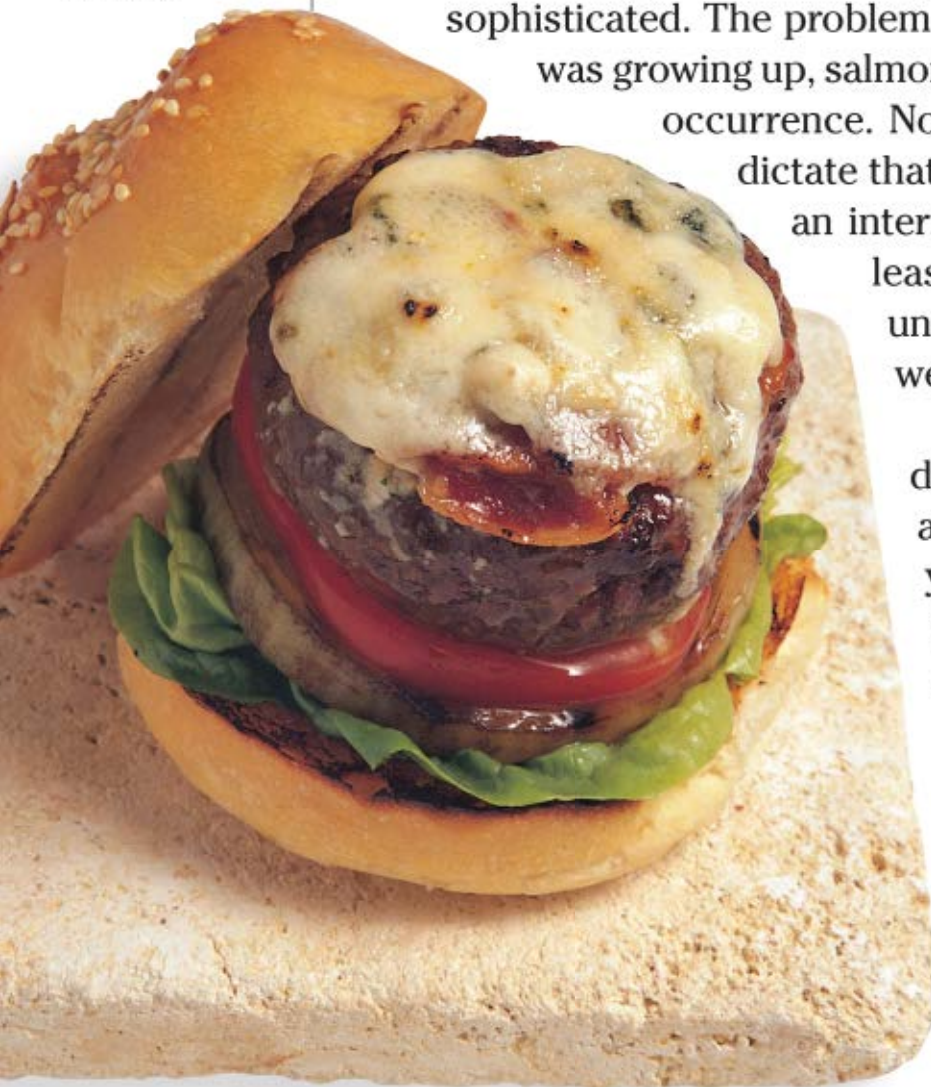
COOKING TIME:
10 to 14 minutes

HOW TO GRILL THE PERFECT HAMBURGER

Chances are, if you're like most Americans, you dream of serving up smoky briskets and competition-quality ribs. But most of the time, when you fire up your grill, it's to cook a humble hamburger. Cooking a great burger has gotten harder in recent years, even though grills have become more sophisticated. The problem lies with the beef. When I was growing up, salmonella poisoning was a freak occurrence. Now, science and prudence dictate that you cook a hamburger to an internal temperature that is at least 160°F—in other words, until it's medium to medium-well done.

Desperate times require desperate measures. Here's a burger quite unlike any you've probably ever tasted. In order to keep succulence in a fully cooked burger, I place a disk of herb butter in the center. The melting butter moistens the meat from the inside, so you can cook it through without drying it out.

Hamburger with
Herb Butter



SETTING UP THE GRILL



1 To set up a charcoal grill for direct grilling, first light the charcoal in a chimney starter (see page 9).



2 Using a garden hoe or other long-handled implement, rake the burning coals into an even layer.



3 To see if the grill is preheated to high, use the test on page 10.

PREPARING THE MEAT



1 To make a hamburger, working quickly and with a light touch, form the ground beef into a flat ball and make a depression in the center with your thumb.



2 Place a slice of herb butter in the depression.

TIPS

■ The first secret to a great burger is to use a flavorful cut of meat. Ground chuck is perfect. So is ground round—or for a classy touch, ground sirloin.

■ The second secret to a great burger is fat. There, I've said it. Forget about calorie counting when you make burgers. A succulent burger requires a fat content of 15 to 20 percent.

THE RECIPE

HAMBURGERS WITH HERB BUTTER

FOR THE HAMBURGERS:

1½ pounds ground sirloin, round, or chuck
 4 tablespoons Garlic-Herb Butter (page 450),
 cut into 4 half-inch-thick slices
 Coarse salt and black pepper
 4 slices (2 to 3 ounces) pancetta
 (Italian bacon; optional)
 4 slices white Cheddar cheese (optional)
 4 hamburger buns or kaiser rolls
 2 tablespoons melted butter

FOR THE TOPPINGS (any or all of the following):

Bibb or red leaf lettuce leaves
 Thin slices of raw or grilled sweet
 onion (page 380)
 Sliced ripe red tomato
 Mustard, ketchup, mayonnaise,
 relish, or whatever other
 condiment you may fancy

1. Wet your hands with cold water and divide the ground beef into 4 portions. Pat each portion into a thick patty filled with a slice of herb butter, as shown in Preparing the Meat, Steps 1 through 3 on pages 99 and 100. Season with salt and pepper and refrigerate the burgers, covered, on a plate lined with plastic wrap while you preheat the grill.

2. Set up the grill for direct grilling (see page 10 for charcoal or page 16 for gas) and preheat to high. When ready to cook, brush and oil the grill grate.

3. Grill the pancetta, if using, until golden brown, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towels to drain.

4. Place the burgers on the hot grate and season again with salt and pepper. Grill the burgers until cooked through, 5 to 7

minutes per side for medium. (If you like, rotate the burgers 90 degrees halfway through cooking to create an attractive crosshatch of grill marks.) If using cheese and/or pancetta, place a slice of each on each burger after you've turned it (pancetta first). To test for doneness, insert an instant-read meat thermometer through the side of the burger into the center. The internal temperature should be at least 160°F for medium.

5. Brush the buns with the melted butter and toast them on the grill, 30 seconds to 1 minute.

6. Assemble the burgers: On the bottom half of each bun, place a lettuce leaf followed by a slice of onion and tomato. Top with the burger, the condiments of your choice, and the top half of the bun.

SERVES 4

VARIATIONS:

In the Balkans, burgers are made with a mixture of ground beef, veal, pork, and sometimes lamb. The spicing in the meat is a little more extravagant too: diced onion, chopped parsley, cumin, paprika, and fresh dill.

ALSO GOOD FOR:

To make lamb burgers, use ground lamb in place of the beef. To make lamb cheeseburgers, substitute goat cheese for the Cheddar.



TIPS

■ Handle the burger as little as possible. A few pats to form it and envelop the butter. That's it. Excess handling bruises the meat.

■ Round slices of pancetta, Italian bacon, are the perfect shape for putting on a burger.

3 Mold the ground beef around the butter to encase it. Keep the seasonings for the burger simple: Sprinkle with salt and pepper.



2 Testing for doneness: Use an instant-read meat thermometer. The meat should be at least 160°F to kill any potentially harmful bacteria.

ON THE GRILL



1 Arrange the burgers on the grill grate. Reseason with salt and pepper as they cook.



3 Toast the buns on the grill.

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Eagle Harbor Loft Bed \$500 OFF Reflected in Price #11109424

Shipping and handling included. Valid 7/17/06 - 7/30/06



Online price \$1,299.99
Instant coupon* -400.00
YOUR COST \$899.99

Eagle Harbor 3-Piece Bedroom Includes bed, nightstand and chest.

\$400 OFF Reflected in Price #11109424

Shipping and handling included. Valid 7/17/06 - 7/30/06



Online price \$3,899.99
Instant coupon* -600.00
YOUR COST \$3,299.99

Dallas 3-Piece Leather Collection Includes sectional, chair and ottoman.

Up to \$600 OFF Reflected in Price #11105873

Shipping and handling included. Valid 7/01/06 - 7/31/06



Online price \$3,399.99
Instant coupon* -700.00
YOUR COST \$2,699.99

Cognac 4-Piece Leather Collection Includes sofa, 2 chairs and ottoman.

Up to \$700 OFF Reflected in Price #111099735

Shipping and handling included. Valid 7/01/06 - 7/31/06



Online price \$289.99
Instant coupon* -70.00
YOUR COST \$219.99

iRocker™ Media Chair Includes iPod docking station, compatible with all MP3 players and most video game systems. Additional colors available.

\$70 OFF Reflected in Price #11125303

Shipping and handling included. Valid 7/17/06 - 7/30/06



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Online price	\$769.99
Instant coupon†	-120.00
YOUR COST	\$649.99

Townsend 3-Piece Occasional Tables \$120 OFF Reflected in Price #1121982 Shipping and handling included. Valid 7/01/06 – 7/31/06



Online price	\$2,149.99
Instant coupon†	-350.00
YOUR COST	\$1,799.99

Soho 8-Piece Dining Collection Includes table, 6 leather dining chairs and side server. **\$350 OFF Reflected in Price** #11096645 Shipping and handling included. Valid 7/03/06 – 7/16/06



Table-Tennis Conversion Top



A.



Online price	\$999.99
Instant coupon†	-250.00
YOUR COST	\$749.99

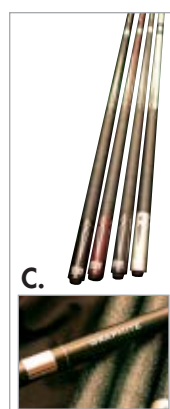
A. Minnesota Fats® 8' Vegas Pool Table with Prince® Table-Tennis Conversion Top \$250 OFF Reflected in Price #187219 Shipping and handling included. Valid 7/10/06 – 7/30/06

B. Minnesota Fats Maple Cue and Case Package \$30 OFF Reflected in Price #112345 Valid 7/10/06 – 7/30/06 Shipping and handling included.

C. Graphite Cue 4-Pack Multi-Weight Bolt System \$179.99 #112347 Shipping and handling included.



B.



C.



Online price	\$4,499.99
Instant coupon†	-500.00
YOUR COST	\$3,999.99


Discovery 400 NLXE 7-Person Spa \$500 OFF Reflected in Price #993303 Shipping and handling included. Valid 7/01/06 – 7/31/06



Online price	\$2,299.99
Instant coupon†	-400.00
YOUR COST	\$1,899.99

Discovery 2-Person Infrared Indoor Sauna \$400 OFF Reflected in Price #114836

Shipping and handling included. Valid 7/01/06 – 7/31/06

 = available only at costco.com

Price and availability are subject to change without notice. Products may include a shipping and handling charge. For details, visit the product page on www.costco.com. †Most online coupons at www.costco.com are manufacturers' coupons. State sales tax may be due on the prediscounted price of the item when purchased using an online coupon. These taxes, if any, are in addition to the amount that you are paying for the product.



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Outdoor generator installed in a discreet location

Automatic transfer switch installed near electrical distribution panel



**Cummins Onan RS20000
20 KW Home Standby Generator**

*Search: Cummins
Shipping and handling included.



**Cummins Onan Home Site 6500
Portable Generator **\$200 OFF****

#115180 Valid 6/30/06 - 7/31/06
Shipping and handling included.



**Cummins Onan RS45000
48 KW Home Standby Generator**

*Search: Cummins
Shipping and handling included.



Malibu Mosquito Defense System Combo-Pack

\$50 OFF Reflected in Price #107825 Valid 6/30/06 - 7/31/06



Malibu 8-Piece Metal Prairie-Style Solar Landscape Kit

Includes shepard's hooks and post stakes for mounting versatility.

\$30 OFF Reflected in Price #112320 Valid 6/30/06 - 7/31/06



ETL SecureLogic® Mail Vault™

Includes pole. Choose from black or white.

\$40 OFF Reflected in Price

#11097933
Shipping and handling included.
Valid 7/07/06 - 7/30/06



Vertical Rock Outdoor Landscape Fountain with Pump

25" W x 28.5" L x 39.5" H.

\$50 OFF Reflected in Price

#113926
Shipping and handling included.
Valid 7/01/06 - 7/31/06



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brother

Brother MFC-8870DW 5-in-1 Wireless Network-Ready Laser Duplex Multi-Function Center **Up to \$100 OFF** #196309
Shipping and handling included. Valid 7/03/06 – 7/09/06



RICOH

Ricoh Aficio SP C210SF Network Color Laser All-in-One Machine
Print, copy, scan and fax. **\$150 OFF Reflected in Price** #100583
Shipping and handling included. Valid 7/24/06 – 7/30/06



hp
invent

HP Officejet 4315xi All-in-One Machine
\$10 OFF Reflected in Price #161709
Shipping and handling included. Valid 7/10/06 – 7/23/06



DLP
A TRUS INSTRUMENTS TECHNOLOGY

HDTV
HIGHER DEFINITION TECHNOLOGY

Optoma

Online price	\$1,099.99
Mail-in rebate	-100.00
YOUR COST	\$999.99

Optoma H31 Home Cinema Projector with 92" Screen
\$100 Mail-in Rebate #111905 Valid 7/01/06 – 7/31/06



Online price	\$219.99
Instant coupon†	-20.00
Mail-in rebate	-20.00
YOUR COST	\$179.99

DCL 19" Wide DVI LCD Response 8ms, 500:1 contrast ratio, 1440 x 900 resolution. **Up to \$40 OFF**
#109232 Valid 7/24/06 – 7/30/06



AMD
Turion64
MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

Online price	\$1,149.99
Instant coupon†	-150.00
YOUR COST	\$999.99

Averatec 7170-EC1 17" Wide Media Center AMD Turion 64 X2
Dual-Core TL-50 1.6 GHz/1GB/100GB/DVDRW.

\$150 OFF Reflected in Price #112974 Valid 7/03/06 – 7/09/06



Experience DELL XPS 700 and XPS M1710**
Free Printer and Upgrade to XP Pro Included

*Search: DellExperience



Select DELL Desktops and Notebooks Up to \$500 OFF Reflected in Price**

*Search: DellPassport Valid 7/10/06 – 7/16/06 Shipping and handling included.



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KIRKLAND *Signature*



The high-quality omega-3 fatty acids in Kirkland Signature Fish Oil Concentrate contribute to a healthy heart and vascular system.* Our oil is supplied by fish that come from cold, deep ocean waters, instead of the farm-raised fish used by many other brands. Our oil is processed for purity and derived from a variety of fish species to maximize beneficial omega-3 fatty acid concentration.

Each easy-to-swallow capsule contains 1000 mg of concentrated fish oil with

300 mg of omega-3 fatty acids. Make Kirkland Signature Fish Oil Concentrate part of your daily supplement regimen. And start treating your body as well as you treat your car.

Exclusively from
COSTCO
WHOLESALE

*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.



USP has tested and verified these Kirkland Signature™ supplements for their ingredients, potency and manufacturing process. USP sets official standards for dietary supplements. See www.usp-dsnp.org.

5.44%*

*actual size.

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Lock in APRs from:

New Car	5.44%
Used Car	6.74%
Refinance	7.00%
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Costco members save on auto financing with discounted rates from 5.44%.

- Discounted auto and motorcycle loan rates
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- 15-minute response†
- Blank Check™ loan as soon as tomorrow

For more information, go to **costco.com** and click on Services.



KIRKLAND
Signature™

Energize



Daily stresses can drain energy levels, making you feel sluggish and worn out. Kirkland Signature B-50 is full of essential B vitamins that may help you combat the effects of stress and increase your energy levels.

B-50 supports the following biological functions:

- Carbohydrate metabolism with B1 and Biotin.
- Energy production from sugars and fats with B2, B3, B12 and Pantothenic Acid.
- Low homocysteine levels with B6, B12 and Folic Acid. Several studies indicate that high levels of homocysteine may contribute to cardiovascular disease.*
- Antioxidant protection against free radicals with vitamins E, C and Zinc.*

Take B-50 everyday to energize!



USP has tested and verified this Kirkland Signature™ supplement for its ingredients, potency and manufacturing process. USP sets official standards for dietary supplements. See www.uspverified.org.

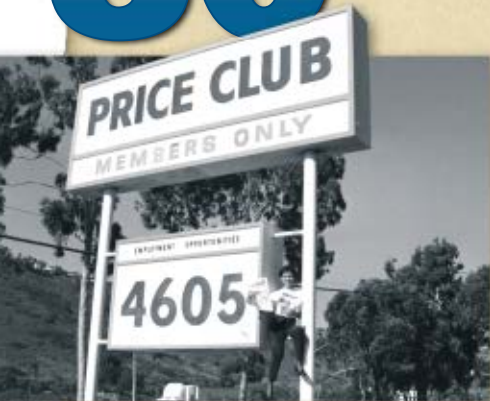
*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

Exclusively from

COSTCO
WHOLESALE

+ = available at most warehouses and costco.com

30 and counting



WHEN PRICE CLUB first opened its doors on July 12, 1976, in a large, dim aircraft hangar on Morena Boulevard in San Diego, Mike Hood was hanging 10 at Imperial Beach. A few months later, Mike was hired over the telephone as a Price Club seasonal employee.

He's been hanging around ever since.

"It was supposed to be my high school job. I worked morning hours, so I had plenty of time for surfing, sailing and other interests," he recalls. "I figured it could work out well for a few months."

Three hundred and fifty-five months later, Mike still thinks he's got a pretty good gig.

"There's a lot of people that have climbed the company ladder who began their career right here in this building," says Mike, a Costco receiving clerk. "That is pretty special."

As Costco prepares to celebrate Morena Boulevard's 30th anniversary as a warehouse club, longtime employees such as Mike Hood and Bob Norton reflected on how far

The original Price Club opened in San Diego 30 years ago. It's now called Costco, but the commitment to value for its members is as strong as ever.

the industry has come in three decades.

"I remember in the late '70s and early '80s our company said they would never accept credit cards," recalls Bob, a supervisor at Morena Boulevard who was hired in 1977.

"We used to have lines that went halfway through the building," Mike adds. "People would leave their shopping carts full and come back an hour later and pay for their stuff."

In 1993, Price Club and Costco merged to form PriceCostco. Today, as Costco Wholesale (the name was changed from PriceCostco in 1995), the company operates nearly 500 warehouses in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Japan, Taiwan, Korea and Mexico.

The Morena Boulevard warehouse has undergone myriad changes. But the pride of 30 years in the warehouse business—on the same street—remains strong. It was the first membership warehouse, and many of the original members still shop there.

"We were the original building in the industry," Bob says. "Many companies have tried to copy us, but nobody does it better."

"Our original members are proud to be part of the originator of the warehouse industry."

Happy 30th, Morena Boulevard.

—Mark E. Stroder



\$20 OFF a weekly rental

That's on top of your member discount!

Rent an Avis car at weekly rates for a minimum of five days and you can receive \$20 off.

An advance reservation is required.

Subject to complete terms and conditions below.

Rental must begin by 12/31/2006.

Book online at **costco.com** or call Costco Travel toll free at 1-877-849-2730.

Please present your Costco membership card at the time of rental.

To save every time you rent, always provide your Avis Worldwide Discount (AWD) number **A108347**.

COUPON #MUGH150



Terms and Conditions

Coupon valid on an intermediate (group C) through a full-size four door (group E) car. Dollars off applies to the time and mileage charges only on a minimum five-day rental period. Taxes, concession recovery fees, vehicle license recovery fee, customer facility charges (\$10/contract in CA) and fuel charges are extra. Optional items such as LDW (\$22.99/day or less) and other surcharges may apply and are extra. An advance reservation is required. May not be used in conjunction with any other coupon, promotion or offer, except your member discount. Coupon valid at participating Avis locations in the contiguous U.S. and Canada. **This offer serves as your coupon. Coupon must be surrendered at time of rental; one per rental.** Offer subject to vehicle availability at time of rental and may not be available on some rates at some times. For reservations made online at costco.com, dollars off will be applied at time of rental, subject to vehicle availability. Rental must meet Avis age, driver and credit requirements. Minimum age may vary by location. An additional daily surcharge may apply for renters under 25 years old. Rental must begin by 12/31/2006.

RENTAL SALES AGENT INSTRUCTIONS. AT CHECKOUT:

In AWD, enter A108347 • In CPN, enter MUGH150

Complete this information:

RA# _____

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Business deal with perks

RWANDAN PRESIDENT Paul Kagame paid a visit in May to Costco President and CEO Jim Sinegal to discuss details of an agreement between the two to carry Rwandan-grown coffee at Costco, under the company's private label, Kirkland Signature™.

"We are working with coffee producers in Rwanda to bring an excellent coffee to market," says Gary Kotzen, a vice president in Costco's food department. "The climate and soil of the area make for some of the best quality conditions."

The coffee, which has just been harvested, will be available in mid to late August.

What's new

Exciting new products arriving this month

at the warehouse




Taquito grande

IN A QUEST TO BUILD a better taquito, Costco food buyers approached the maker of El Monterey food products with this demand: Make us something bigger, stuffed with 100 percent shredded beef (and no filler or preservatives) and made with all-natural, flavorful spices, the kinds found in authentic Mexican meals.

The result: Kirkland Signature™ El Monterey Shredded Beef Taquitos. These oversized taquitos, made with large, freshly baked corn tortillas, are stuffed end-to-end with shredded beef. Each weighs 2 ounces and each bite is packed with flavor.

They make great snacks or can become part of a full dinner. Preparation is easy—just 75 seconds in the microwave or about 10 minutes in a conventional oven.

Item #951366 



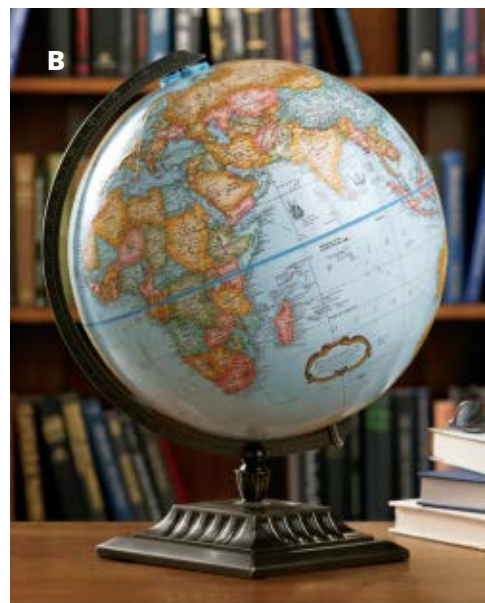
A

A. Refillable First-Aid Kit

Includes a full assortment of bandages, antiseptics, medications, trauma supplies, eye-injury center, hot/cold therapy, first-aid instruments and a comprehensive first-aid guide. Features the SmartTab ezRefill system for easy reordering of supplies. Item #100613

B. Classic 12" World Globe

Set on a sturdy, cast-metal base with a brushed-nickel-plated finish, this globe features a cast-metal semi-meridian for latitudinal measurements, illustrations of ancient explorer ships, raised topographical relief and accurate, up-to-date cartography with more than 4,000 place names. Item #171609



A glass act


MANY OLD WORLD TRADITIONS and designs are timeless, such as the Vetro Di Oro art glass collection.

Inspired by the pre-Roman-era technique of gilding (coating with gold) the reverse side of glass, the Vetro Di Oro art glass collection marries today's digital printing capability with the centuries-old handmade art form.

The process starts with a high-resolution digital image. The finest dye inks are applied

through a proprietary process to the reverse side of concave glass. Then 4-inch squares of gold and silver leaf are applied by hand, until the entire back of the glass is covered. Each Vetro Di Oro piece is then sealed to protect this individual work of art.

Furniture buyer Brett Jackson says Costco is the first major retailer to carry this line.

"Retail on this would be \$99 to \$199 for a single piece in a gallery setting," says Jackson. "We are under \$45 for a two-pack." Dimensions: 18" x 18" x 2" Item #961978 



C. Kirkland Signature™ by Borghese Cosmetic Brush Set

This 14-piece professional set includes 12 premium natural- and synthetic-bristle cosmetic brushes, one professional eyelash curler and a designer faux-leather brush case for on the go. Item #985099

D. Panasonic KX-TG5777 5.8 GHz Expandable Digital Cordless Phone with Answering System

With two full-color backlit LCD handsets included, this unit expands up to eight handsets. Features include customized



C



E



D

ringer, talking caller ID, call-waiting caller ID, ringer ID, picture ID, icon operation and a USB port for downloading pictures, rings, wallpaper and more. The all-digital answering-machine system features a two-digit LCD call counter on base, voice menu with time/day stamp, memo record and remote control from handset or outside line. Item #108376 **Panasonic KX-TGA573S 5.8 GHz FHSS GigaRange Expandable Digital Cordless Camera accessory** is not included and is available on **costco.com only**.  Item #112888

E. La Crosse Technology Projection Alarm Clock

The alarm clock shows the time, date and indoor temperature, and projects the time on the wall or ceiling in easy-to-view numbers. (Projection arm is adjustable for proper viewing.) The LCD window thermometer shows outdoor temperature, records minimum and maximum temperature and includes window-hanging hardware. Item #104711

F. Lisa Frank School Binder Tote

Available in several Lisa Frank character designs, this three-pocket zip tote is packed with back-to-school supplies, including a prism portfolio, prism glitter pencils, prism binder, prism clipboard and other supplies. Item #688838



F

MEMBER SERVICES

Update

Current news for Costco members

SERVICE OF THE MONTH features business and personal services offering exceptional value to Costco members.

SERVICE OF THE MONTH

Another critical financial goal



COMSTOCK

NEXT TO PLANNING for retirement, mapping out a strategy for financing college education expenses is the most frequent goal for members seeking the service of Ameriprise Financial.

An Ameriprise financial advisor has the knowledge and tools to help in the three crucial areas of education planning:

■ **Financial aid.** When calculating need, most colleges and all federal aid programs expect more than 33 percent of any assets owned by your child to be dedicated to paying college costs, while less than 6 percent of your own assets are viewed as available for payment. An advisor may suggest keeping education and other investments in your name.

■ **Taxes.** An advisor can propose tax-advantaged savings plans to get the most out of the current laws (some of which are expected to expire in 2010), and help you adjust your plan over time.

■ **Control.** Custodial gift funds can be a double-edged sword. Planning with an advisor helps determine the kind of control you want to exercise over this important form of savings.

Costco members can take advantage of a complimentary, no-obligation initial consultation with an Ameriprise financial advisor and, for doing so, will receive a \$25 Costco Cash card. Executive

ALSO: Members who purchase a financial plan will receive \$200 off the cost of an initial written financial plan, and Costco Gold Star and Business members will receive \$100 off. For information, call toll-free 1-866-549-5952 or visit costco.com and click on "Services," then on "Financial Planning."

Investments and financial advisory services made available through Ameriprise Financial Services, Inc., member NASD and SIPC.



Don't forget to use your Reward on your next trip to Costco.

PRACTICAL TIPS

Controlling processing costs



PHOTODISC

THE PROFESSIONALS at NOVA Information Systems, Costco's merchant credit-card processing provider, suggest these tips for managing your processing costs.

■ **Make sure you batch nightly.** Batching (closing out your terminal) each night will ensure that you are qualifying transactions at the best possible rate. Rates are best for transactions processed the same day, rise to a higher rate if not closed out within 24 hours and rise more if closed out after 48 hours or more. Consider setting up auto-close so your terminal will

batch out for you if you forget.

■ **Enter required information.** In order to avoid higher rates when accepting corporate, business or purchasing cards, you should always enter a customer code and tax amount when prompted by your terminal. If either piece of information is missing, the rate will be higher.

Costco members save on credit-card processing with the NOVA program. To learn how much you can save, call toll-free 1-888-605-2488 and mention priority code 83104.

SERVICE UPDATES

Identity Guard program goes national

COSTCO'S CREDIT REPORTS & Monitoring service, provided by Identity Guard®, will soon roll out a nationwide program. Brochures will be available in all warehouse locations starting in August.

Regularly monitoring your credit files can reveal changes associated with identity theft. Through this program, you can get a three-in-one credit report with side-by-side credit histories and credit scores from the three major credit bureaus.

Daily monitoring by Identity Guard yields prompt alerts to certain changes so you can react quickly. Studies show that fast discovery of the misuse of personal information reduces the likelihood of loss.

How much is peace of mind worth? Executive Members pay just \$7.49 per month for this service. Business and Gold Star members pay \$9.49 per month. To enroll, visit costco.com, click on "Services," then click on "Credit Reports & Monitoring."



PHOTODISC

Running payroll with QuickBooks

COSTCO NOW OFFERS QuickBooks® Assisted Payroll from Intuit® Payroll Services. You can manage your employee processing while Intuit handles your federal and state payroll tax deposits and filings, including W-2s.

Additional features include direct deposit, printing your own checks and customized payroll reports to best fit your business's needs.

For more information about QuickBooks Assisted Payroll, call an Intuit payroll specialist at 1-866-297-8064.

special events

JULY 2006

New and exciting products available
at warehouses for a limited time only

Click [here](#) for a list of special events by region.

CONNECTICUT

Brookfield

July 7-16 Custom leather and upholstered furniture
July 20-30 Assorted art and mirrors
Milford
July 7-16 High-end cookware
July 14-23 SunSetter retractable awnings

DELAWARE

Christiana

July 20-30 Children's furniture
July 20-23 High-end cookware

MARYLAND

Arundel Mills

July 20-30 Handmade serveware

Beltsville

July 20-30 Gulf Coast spas

Frederick

July 14-23 SunSetter retractable awnings
July 20-30 Gemstone and silver jewelry

July 20-30 Handmade serveware

Glen Burnie

July 21-30 Austrian crystal and gemstone jewelry

MASSACHUSETTS

Avon

July 7-16 Custom leather and upholstered furniture

Danvers

July 14-23 SunSetter retractable awnings

W Springfield

July 20-23 High-end cookware

NEW JERSEY

Brick Township

July 6-16 Amanda apparel
July 20-30 Living, dining and bedroom furniture

Bridgewater

July 14-23 SunSetter retractable awnings
July 20-30 Roland pianos

Clifton

July 6-10 High-end cookware
July 20-30 Roland pianos

E Hanover

July 6-16 Living, dining and bedroom furniture

July 20-30 Gemstone and silver jewelry

Edison

July 7-16 Stone garden sculptures and fountains
July 20-30 Roland pianos

Hackensack

July 13-16 Grandfather clocks and curios
July 20-30 Stone garden sculptures and fountains

Hazlet

July 20-30 Living, dining and bedroom furniture
July 20-30 Roland pianos

Mount Laurel

July 6-16 Assorted art
July 20-30 Living, dining and bedroom furniture
July 28-Aug 6 SunSetter retractable awnings

Ocean Township

July 6-16 Gemstone and silver jewelry

July 20-30 Living, dining and bedroom furniture

Union

July 6-16 Custom leather and upholstered furniture
July 21-30 Austrian crystal and gemstone jewelry

Wayne

July 6-16 Gemstone and silver jewelry

July 21-30 High-end cookware

Wharton

July 6-16 Living, dining and bedroom furniture
July 20-30 Gemstone and silver jewelry

NEW YORK

Commack

July 6-16 Oriental rugs
July 21-30 Custom leather and upholstered furniture

Holbrook

July 6-16 Assorted art
July 20-30 Oriental rugs

Lawrence

July 6-16 Oriental rugs
July 21-30 Custom leather and upholstered furniture

Melville

July 6-16 Oriental rugs
July 21-30 Custom leather and upholstered furniture

Nesconset

July 6-16 Oriental rugs
July 21-30 Austrian crystal and gemstone jewelry
July 21-30 High-end cookware

Port Chester

July 6-16 Stone garden sculptures and fountains
July 20-30 Oriental rugs

Queens

July 6-16 Assorted decorative glass

Staten Island

July 6-9 Grandfather clocks and curios
July 20-30 Massage chairs

Westbury

July 7-16 Austrian crystal and gemstone jewelry
July 14-23 SunSetter retractable awnings
July 20-30 Oriental rugs

Yonkers

July 20-30 Oriental rugs

PENNSYLVANIA

Cranberry

July 7-12 High-end cookware
July 14-23 SunSetter retractable awnings

King of Prussia

July 20-30 Amanda apparel

Montgomeryville

July 6-16 Assorted art
July 14-23 SunSetter retractable awnings
July 20-30 Massage chairs

VIRGINIA

Chantilly

July 6-16 Children's furniture
July 21-30 Custom leather and upholstered furniture

Chesterfield

July 20-30 Assorted art

Fairfax

July 6-16 Assorted art

Fredericksburg

July 7-16 Custom leather and upholstered furniture

Harrisonburg

July 7-16 Custom leather and upholstered furniture

Leesburg

July 5-16 Garden sheds
July 21-30 Custom leather and upholstered furniture

Manassas

July 7-16 Pianos
July 20-30 Assorted art

Newington

July 6-16 Children's furniture

Newport News

July 20-30 Assorted art

Norfolk

July 20-30 Assorted art

Pentagon City

July 6-16 Assorted art
July 21-30 Custom leather and upholstered furniture

Sterling

July 6-16 Gulf Coast spas
July 7-16 Austrian crystal and gemstone jewelry
July 21-31 Stone garden sculptures and fountains

W Henrico

July 6-16 Gemstone and silver jewelry
July 20-30 Assorted art

Winchester

July 7-16 Custom leather and upholstered furniture



Theme-park tickets and more

Tickets are available at most area warehouse locations for this park—and many other popular attractions.

New Hampshire Savings on Canobie Lake Park admission tickets at the Maryland and New Hampshire warehouses.

New Jersey Six Flags Great Adventure general admission tickets.

Costco warehouse hours

Regular Hours

Monday–Friday 11am–8:30pm
Saturday 9:30am–6pm
Sunday 10am–6pm

Exclusive Business Members' Hour

Monday–Friday 10am–11am

costco.com

open 24 hours a day,
7 days a week

specialty services

Services at all locations

Bakery, Deli/Produce, Food Court or Hot Dog Cart, Fresh Meat, 1-Hour Photo (APS, 35 mm and digital processing), Optical Dept., Pharmacy, Special Order Kiosk and Tire Center

Costco Auto Program. 1-800-800-9288; www.costcoauto.com

Costco Travel.* 1-877-849-2730

Member Services.* 1-800-220-6000

*Also available at costco.com

CONNECTICUT

	ATM	Costco.com Kiosk	Gas Station	Hearing Aids	Service Deli
Brookfield	•				•
Enfield	•		•	•	•
Milford	•		•	•	•
Norwalk	•				•
Waterbury	•		•	•	•

DELAWARE

Christiana	•			•	•
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MARYLAND

Arundel Mills			•	•	•
Beltsville	•		•	•	•
Frederick	•		•	•	•
Gaithersburg	•	•		•	•
Glen Burnie	•		•	•	•
White Marsh	•				•

MASSACHUSETTS

Avon	•				•
Danvers	•				•
Dedham	•				•
Everett	•				•
W Springfield	•				•
Waltham	•				•

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Nashua					•
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NEW JERSEY

Brick Township	•			•	•
Bridgewater	•			•	•
Clifton	•		•	•	•
E Hanover	•			•	•
Edison	•			•	•
Hackensack	•			•	•
Hazlet	•			•	•
Mount Laurel	•			•	•
Ocean Township	•		•	•	•
Union	•			•	•
Wayne	•			•	•
Wharton	•			•	•

NEW YORK

Brooklyn	•				•
Commack	•			•	•
Holbrook	•				•
Lawrence	•			•	•
Melville	•			•	•
Nanuet	•			•	•
Nesconset	•			•	•
New Rochelle	•			•	•
Port Chester	•			•	•
Queens	•			•	•
Staten Island	•		•	•	•
Westbury	•	•		•	•
Yonkers	•			•	•

PENNSYLVANIA

Cranberry	•		•	•	
Harrisburg	•		•	•	•
King of Prussia	•			•	•
Lancaster	•		•	•	•
Montgomeryville	•			•	•
Robinson	•		•	•	•

VERMONT

Colchester	•				•
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VIRGINIA

Chantilly	•				•
Chesterfield	•				•
Fairfax	•			•	•
Fredericksburg	•		•	•	•
Harrisonburg	•		•	•	•
Leesburg	•		•	•	•
Manassas	•		•	•	•
Newington	•			•	•
Newport News	•			•	•
Norfolk	•		•	•	•
Pentagon City	•			•	•
Sterling	•	•	•	•	•
West Henrico	•		•	•	•
Winchester	•		•	•	•

*Dates and events are
subject to change.*

Horsepower healing

COURTESY OF LITTLE BIT THERAPEUTIC RIDING CENTER



FOR CENTURIES, people have found solace in horseback riding. But for the last 30 years, staff members and volunteers at Little Bit Therapeutic Riding Center in Woodinville, Washington, have seen its riders enjoy much more than mental and emotional therapy. The 4.5-acre equestrian center, located about 20 minutes outside Seattle, uses therapeutic horse riding programs to help children with disabilities of all kinds gain physical and mental victories.

The concept of using horses in formal therapeutic applications, called hippotherapy (the Greek word *hippos* means horse), was first developed in Western Europe in the early 1950s.

Therapists at these facilities use the natural rhythm and movement of a horse's gait as a tool

Little Bit Therapeutic Riding Center helps hundreds of children with disabilities.

to strengthen riders' trunk and leg muscles, increase concentration and communication skills and address other disabilities. Currently there are about 700 hippotherapy organizations similar to Little Bit in the United States.

Little Bit was established in 1975 with five riders, one instructor and two horses in a rented stable. Today the organization is a well-equipped riding facility, has a \$1 million annual budget, 15 therapy horses, 14 full-time staff, about 250 volunteers—and about 200 riders on a waiting list. To learn more about hippotherapy or donate time or money to Little Bit, visit www.littlebit.org or call (425) 882-1554.—Will Fifield

Puppy love

For years, Todd and Elizabeth Linaberry, Costco members in Modesto, California, have been big fans of Kirkland Signature™ products. Sergeant Pepper, their miniature schnauzer puppy, who proudly posed for this photo, is especially fond of Kirkland Signature bath tissue.



ELIZABETH LINABERRY

We want to hear from you

IF YOU HAVE a note, photo or story to share (it should be about Costco or Costco members in some way), you can send it to "The Member Connection," *The Costco Connection*, P.O. Box 34088, Seattle, WA 98124-1088, or e-mail to connection@costco.com with "The Member Connection" in the subject line. Submissions cannot be acknowledged or returned.

Clownin' around

BOB PALMER, a longtime Costco member who lives in Red Deer, Alberta, juggles a busy schedule. He performs as many as 400 shows annually, at which he walks the tight rope, does unicycle tricks, walks on stilts and, yes, juggles. Under the stage name Flyin' Bob (www.flybob.com), Palmer has been combining comedy and variety arts professionally for 15 years. He performs for corporations, in schools, for festivals, in theaters and at many other venues.

Palmer, who often teams up with Miyako, his wife, a face painter, has taken his show all over Canada and to Europe and parts of Asia.

"It all started when, at the age of 21, I saw a juggler performing on TV," explains Palmer. "I thought it looked like fun, so I got a book from the library on juggling and taught myself to juggle over a weekend. After that I was hooked."

Palmer says leaving his day job as department manager for a book and magazine wholesaler, at the age of 28, was the best career decision he's ever made. "I'm having a fantastic time performing as Flyin' Bob," says Palmer. "I'm a big believer in taking something you love and turning it into a lifestyle. That way you are not going to work, you are just living your life.—Will Fifield



MIYAKO PALMER

Costco member
Bob Palmer



we're slimming down

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(Bonus Pack includes vehicle power adapter, belt clip or case, and handsfree earbud)



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